WEST AFRICAN STUDIES

BY

MARY H. KINGSLEY

WEST AFRICAN STUDIES

Mrs. H. K. Hughes

WEST AFRICAN STUDIES

BY

MARY H. KINGSLEY

AUTHOR OF "TRAVELS IN WEST AFRICA"

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAP

SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS

London

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED

NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1901

All rights reserved

First Edition, 1 vol. 8vo. 1899.
Second Edition, with additional Chapters, 1 vol. Ex. Crown 8vo. 1901.

TO MY BROTHER

MR. C. G. KINGSLEY

AND TO MY FRIEND WHO IS DEAD

THIS BOOK IS

Dedicated

PREFACE TO THE READER

* * * * *

YOU may remember that after my return from a second sojourn in West Africa, when I had been to work at fetish and fresh-water fishes, I published a word-swamp of a book about the size of Norie's *Navigation*. Mr. George Macmillan lured me into so doing by stating that if I gave my own version of the affair I should remove misconceptions; and if I did not it was useless to object to such things as paragraphs in American papers to the effect that "Miss Kingsley, having crossed the continent of Africa, ascended the Niger to Victoria, and then climbed the Peak of Cameroon; she is shortly to return to England, when she will deliver a series of lectures on French art, which she has had great opportunities of studying." Well, thanks to Mr. Macmillan's kindness, I did publish a sort of interim report, called *Travels in West Africa*. It did not work out in the way he prophesied. It has led to my being referred to as "an intrepid explorer," a thing there is not the making of in me, who am ever the prey of frights, worries and alarms; and its main effect, as far as I am personally concerned, has been to plunge me further still in debt for kindness from my fellow creatures, who, though capable of doing all I have done and more capable of writing about it in really good English, have tolerated that book and frequently me also, with half-a-dozen colds in my head and a dingy temper. Chief among all these creditors of mine I must

[1] The introductory paragraphs referred to the Appendices omitted in the present edition.

name Mrs. J. R. Green, Mrs. George Macmillan and Miss Lucy Toulmin Smith; but don't imagine that they or any other of my creditors approve of any single solitary opinion I express, or the way in which I express it. It is merely that I have the power of bringing out in my fellow-creatures, white or black, their virtues, in a way honourable to them and fortunate for me.

I must here also acknowledge the great debt of gratitude I owe to Mr. John Holt, of Liverpool. A part of my work lies in the affairs of the so-called Bubies of Fernando Po, and no one knows so much about Fernando Po as Mr. Holt. He has also been of the greatest help to me in other ethnological questions, and has permitted me to go through his collections of African things most generously. It is, however, idle for me to attempt to chronicle my debt to Mr. Holt, for in every part of my work I owe him much. I do not wish you to think he is responsible for any of it, but his counsels have ever been on the side of moderation and generosity in adverse criticism. I honestly confess I believe I am by nature the very mildest of critics; but Mr. Holt and others think otherwise; and so, although I have not altered my opinions, I have refrained from publishing several developments of them, in deference to superior knowledge.

I am also under a debt of gratitude to Professor Tylor. He also is not involved in my opinions, but he kindly permits me to tell him things that I can only "tell Tylor"; and now and again, as you will see in the Fetish question, he comes down on me with a refreshing firmness; in fact, I feel that any attempt at fantastic explanations of West African culture will not receive any encouragement from him; and it is a great comfort to a mere drudge like myself to know there is some one who cares for facts, without theories draping them.

I will merely add that to all my own West Coast friends I remain indebted; and that if you ever come across any one who says I owe them much, you may take it as a rule that I do, though in all my written stuff I have most carefully ticketed its source.

I now turn to the explanation and apology for this book, briefly. Apology for its literary style I do not make. I am not a literary man, only a student of West Africa. I am not proud of my imperfections in English. I would write better if I could, but I cannot. I find when I try to write like other people that I do not say what seems to me true, and thereby lose all right to say anything; and I am more convinced, the more I know of West Africa—my education is continuous and unbroken by holidays—that it is a difficult thing to write about, particularly when you are a student hampered on all sides by masses of inchoate material, unaided by a set of great authors to whose opinions you can refer, and addressing a public that is not interested in the things that interest you so keenly and that you regard as so deeply important.

In my previous book I most carefully confined myself to facts and arranged those facts on as thin a line of connecting opinion as possible. I was anxious to see what manner of opinion they would give rise to in the minds of the educated experts up here; not from a mere feminine curiosity, but from a distrust in my own ability to construct theories. On the whole this method has worked well. Ethnologists of different theories have been enabled to use such facts as they saw fit; but one of the greatest of ethnologists has grumbled at me, not for not giving a theory, but for omitting to show the inter-relationship of certain groups of facts, an inter-relationship his acuteness enabled him to know existed. Therefore I here give the key to a good deal of this inter-relationship by dividing the different classes of Fetishism into four schools. In order to do this I have now to place before you a good deal of material that was either crowded out of the other work or considered by me to require further investigation and comparison. As for the new statements I make, I have been enabled to give them this from the constant information and answers to questions I receive from West Africa. For the rest of the Fetish I remain a mere photographic plate.

Regarding the other sections of this book, they are to me all subsidiary in importance to the Fetish, but they belong to it. They refer to its environment, without a knowledge of which you cannot know the thing. What Mr. Macmillan has ticketed as Introductory—I could not find a name for it at all—has a certain bearing on West African affairs, as showing the life on a West Coast boat. I may remark it is a section crowded out of my previous book; so, though you may not be glad to see it here, you must be glad it was not there.

The fishing chapter was also cast out of *Travels in West Africa*. Critics whom I respect said it was wrong of me not to have explained how I came by my fishes. This made me fear that they thought I had stolen them, so I published the article promptly in the *National Review*, and, by the kindness of its editor, Mr. Maxse, I reprint it.

The chapter on Law contains all the material I have been so far able to arrange on this important study. The material on Criminal Law I must keep until I can go out again to West Africa, and read further in the minds of men in the African Forest Belt region; for in them, in that region, is the original text. The connection between Religion and Law I have not reprinted here, it being available, thanks to the courtesy of the Hibbert Trustees, in the *National Review*, September, 1897.[1]

I have left my stiffest bit of explanation and apology till the last, namely, that relating to the Crown Colony system, which is the thing that makes me beg you to disassociate from me every friend I have, and deal with me alone. I am alone responsible for it, the only thing for which I may be regarded as sharing the responsibility with others being the statistics from Government sources.

It has been the most difficult thing I have ever had to do. I would have given my right hand to have done it well, for I know what it means if things go on as they are. Alas! I am hampered with my bad method of

[1] Included as Chapter XX. in the present edition.

expression. I cannot show you anything clearly and neatly. I have to show you a series of pictures of things, and hope you will get from those pictures the impression which is the truth. I dare not set myself up to tell you the truth. I only say, look at it; and to the best of my ability faithfully give you, not an artist's picture, but a photograph, an overladen with detail, colourless version; all the time wishing to Heaven there was some one else doing it who could do it better, and then I know you would understand, and all would be well. I know there are people who tax me with a brutality in statement, I feel unjustly; and it makes me wonder what they would say if they had to speak about West Africa. It is a repetition of the difficulty a friend of mine and myself had over a steam launch called the Dragon Fly, whose internal health was chronically poor, and subject to bad attacks. Well, one afternoon, he and I had to take her out to the home-going steamer, and she had suffered that afternoon in the engines, and when she suffered anywhere she let you know it. We did what we could for her, in the interests of humanity and ourselves; we gave her lots of oil, and fed her with delicately-chopped wood; but all to but little avail. So both our tempers being strained when we got to the steamer, we told her what the other one of us had been saying about the Dragon Fly. The purser of the steamer thereon said "that people who said things like those about a poor inanimate steam launch were fools with a flaming hot future, and lost souls entirely." We realised that our observations had been imperfect; and so, being ever desirous of improving ourselves, we offered to put the purser on shore in the Dragon Fly. We knew she was feeling still much the same, and we wanted to know what he would say when jets of superheated steam played on him. He came, and they did; and when they did, you know, he said things I cannot repeat. Nevertheless, things of the nature of our own remarks, but so much finer of the kind, that we regarded him with awe when he was returning thanks to the "poor inanimate steam launch"; but it was when it

came to his going ashore, gladly to leave us and her, that we found out what that man could say; and we morally fainted at his remarks made on discovering that he had been sitting in a pool of smutty oil, which she had insidiously treated him to, in order to take some of the stuffing out of him about the superior snowwhiteness of his trousers. Well, that purser went off the scene in a blue flame; and I said to my companion, "Sir! we cannot say things like that." "Right you are, Miss Kingsley," he said sadly; "you and I are only fit for Sunday school entertainments."

It is thus with me about this Crown Colony affair. I know I have not risen to the height other people—my superiors, like the purser—would rise to, if they knew it; but at the same time, I may seem to those who do not know it, who only know the good intentions of England, and who regard systems as inanimate things, to be speaking harshly. I would not have mentioned this affair at all, did I not clearly see that our present method of dealing with tropical possessions under the Crown Colony system was dangerous financially, and brought with it suffering to the native races and disgrace to English gentlemen, who are bound to obey and carry out orders given them by the system.

Plotinus very properly said that the proper thing to do was to superimpose the idea upon the actual. I am not one of those who will ever tell you things are impossible, but I am particularly hopeful in this matter. England has an excellent idea regarding her duty to native races in West Africa. She has an excellent actual in the West African native to superimpose her idea upon. All that is wanted is the proper method; and this method I assure you that Science, true knowledge, that which Spinoza termed the inward aid of God, can give you. I am not Science, but only one of her brick-makers, and I beg you to turn to her. Remember you have tried to do without her in African matters for 400 years, and on the road to civilisation and advance there you have travelled on a cabbage leaf.

I have now only the pleasant duty of remarking that

in this book I have said nothing regarding missionary questions. I do not think it will ever be necessary for me to mention those questions again except to Nonconformist missionaries. I say this advisedly, because, though I have not one word to retract of what I have said, the saying of it has demonstrated to me the fearless honesty and the perfect chivalry in controversy of the Nonconformist missions in England. As they are the most extensively interested in West Africa, if on my next stay out in West Africa I find anything I regard as rather wrong in missionary affairs I intend to have it out within doors; for I know that the Nonconformists will be clear-headed, and fight fair, and stick to the point.

MARY H. KINGSLEY.

December, 1899.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE TO SECOND EDITION

BEFORE Miss Kingsley left England on the journey which ended in her death, she made arrangements for a popular edition of her *West African Studies*, to range with that of her earlier volume of *Travels in West Africa*. In order to reduce the bulk, and at the same time to make room for some later contributions, in the form of lectures or magazine articles, to the subjects dealt with in the *Studies*, it was agreed that the valuable appendices by the Comte de Cardi and Mr. John Harford, which enriched the original edition, should be omitted from the present reprint. The new matter, which begins at p. 377, comprises the well-known Hibbert Lecture on "African Law and Religion," some articles on "Property in West Africa," reprinted, by kind permission of Mr. Nicol Dunn, from the *Morning Post*, and two lectures delivered respectively at Liverpool and at the Imperial Institute, one on Imperialism in general, and the other on "Imperialism in West Africa." From the *Morning Post* letters certain passages have been omitted, as they are in substance repeated in other parts of this volume. The two lectures on Imperialism to some extent traverse the same ground, but here the repetition seemed to be justified by some difference in the point of view. The lecture at the Imperial Institute, which is included by her express

wish, was her last public utterance, and it is commended to the special attention of her readers, as containing her most earnest and well-considered views on the racial problems which confront us in West Africa, and on the wise treatment of which, in her judgment, depends the success of English rule in that part of the world.

That this subject still occupied her thoughts, even on her voyage out to the Cape, may be seen from the following remarkable letter which she addressed from the s.s. *Moor* to the native editor of a new monthly magazine, entitled *The New Africa* which is published at Monrovia, in Liberia. The letter appeared in the August number, two months after its writer's premature death.

THE UNION LINER "MOOR,"
In the Bay of Biscay.

DEAR SIR :—

I have been anxious to write and thank you for the review of my book, *West African Studies*, which you published in the November number of the *New Africa*.

I have been prevented from so doing up to now by wretched health, caused by repeated attacks of influenza, and by pressure of work. I now take the opportunity of the leisure I have on board ship to attempt to thank you for having so sympathetically understood what my views on the subject of African culture were. I own it is no easy matter to do this, because I do not belong to any well-known party in this matter and my method of expression is, I know, bad ; and I am therefore all the more grateful to those few who will take the trouble to understand what I mean.

This subject of the relationship between European and African culture is one in which I am quite deeply interested. I am quite sure that the majority of the Anglo-Saxons are good men, and I am equally sure the majority of the true Negroes are good men —possibly the percentage of perfect angels and calm scientific minds in both races is less than might be desired, but that we cannot help. Now it seems to me a deplorable thing that the present state of feeling between the two races should be so strained ; and that unsatisfactory state, I cannot avoid thinking, arises largely from mutual misunderstanding. It does not seem to me to be unavoidable—a natural race hatred—but a thing removable by making the two people understand each other, and by avoiding rousing a hatred in either for the other by forcing them into interference with each other's institutions.

The great difficulty is of course how to get the people to understand each other. The white race seems to me to blame in saying

that all the reason for its interference in Africa is the improvement of the native African, and then proceeding to alter African institutions without in the least understanding them; while the African is to blame for not placing clearly before the Anglo-Saxon what African institutions really are, and so combating the false and exaggerated view given of them by stray travellers, missionaries and officials, who for their own aggrandisement exaggerate the difficulties and dangers with which they have to deal. It is mere human nature for them to do this thing, but the effect produced on the minds of our statesmen has terrible consequences. The stay-at-home statesmen think that Africans are all awful savages or silly children—people who can only be dealt with on a reformatory penitentiary line. This view you know is not mine, nor that of the very small party—the scientific ethnologists—who deal with Africa; but it is the view of the statesmen and the general public and the mission public, in African affairs. And it will remain so until you who know European culture, who are educated in our culture, and who also know African culture, will take your place as true ambassadors and peacemakers between the two races and place before the English statesmen the true African, and destroy the fancy African made by exaggeration, that he has now in his mind. Forgive me for speaking plainly upon a very delicate point, but it seems to me that the leading men among the European-educated Africans have depended too much on the religious side of the question. I know that there is a general opinion among the leading men of both races that Christianity will give the one possible solution to the whole problem. I fail to be able to believe this. I fail to believe Christianity will bring peace between the two races for the simple reason that though it may be possible to convert Africans *en masse* into practical Christians, it is quite impossible so to convert Europeans *en masse*. You have only got to look at the history of any European nation—the Dutch, the Spanish, the Italian and German—every one calling themselves Christians, but none the more for that, tolerant and peaceable. Each one of them is ready to take out a patent for a road to Heaven and make that road out of men's blood and bones and the ashes of burnt homesteads. Of course by doing this they are not following the true teaching of Jesus Christ, but that has not and will not become a factor in politics. So I venture to say that you who build on Christianity in this matter are not building on safe ground. You cannot by talking about Christianity to the Europeans save your people. I believe there is a thing you could appeal to more safely in this case of the Anglo-Saxon, particularly the English—that thing is *honour*, the honour of a gentleman. There are thousands of Englishmen who would not mind being told they were no Christians to do so and so, who would mind being told they were no gentlemen to do so and so, and who would not do wrong if they knew the facts of the case; who would not destroy native independence and institutions if they but knew what those things really

were ; who would respect native law if they knew what it was, and who would give over sneering at the African and respect him if they knew him as he is really and truly, as I have known him ; and who, though they might say, as I do, the African is different from the European, yet would say, he is a very fine fellow and we can be friends. Then there is another factor in this matter I wish you to consider carefully and let me some day know your opinion on, namely, the factor of nationalism. I believe that no race can, as a race, advance except on its own line of development, and that it is the duty of England, if she intends really and truly to advance the African on the plane of culture and make him a citizen of the world, to preserve the African nationalism and not destroy it ; but destroy it she will unless you who know it come forward and demonstrate that African nationalism is a good thing, and that it is not a welter of barbarism, cannibalism and cruelty. I have had to stand up alone these two years and fight for African freedom and institutions, while Africans equally well and better educated in English culture have been talking about religious matters, etc., to a pack of people who do *not care* about Christianity at all. The Christian general public up here will bring little influence to bear on preserving Africa's institutions. The public, be it granted, is a powerful one, but it has been taught that all African native institutions are bad, and unless you preserve your institutions, above all *your land law*, you cannot, no race can, preserve your liberty.

I should like to direct your attention to a book called *Black Jamaica*, by a Mr. Livingston, recently published. That book is much thought of just now. In it you will see it put down that those Africans who went as slaves to Jamaica were people of no culture of their own ; they were, as it were, slates or blank sheets of paper on which any man could write what he chose to. Well that is not true. Those Africans had a culture of their own—not a perfect one, but one that could be worked up towards perfection, just as European culture could be worked up. I do not say that if Europe does break down the nationality of Africa she will utterly destroy Africans or African culture, but I do say that if she does it, she will make the Africans a people like the Jews—a landless people and an unhappy people. I beg you, Sir, to do your best to prevent this fate falling on your noble race. I believe you can best do it by stating that there is an African law and an African culture ; that the African has institutions and a state form of his own. I believe if you do this thing fairly and well, that England at any rate will not destroy the African nationality, nor will she give them an African grievance, as she from *ignorance* not *intention* has given the Irish. If you will look up the old Irish Brehon laws, you will find there the same form of land law you have in Africa. The English have only during the past 50 years or so known that law. Had they known it in Elizabeth's day, we should have had no Irish land question. You have the chance. God is always giving

chances of teaching men in time how to prevent a repetition of the Irish tragedy. I think if you will do the work it will be good work. Mr. Sarbah is at present the only man who has worked on the question in his book on *Fanti Customary Law*. That book has done a great deal, and Mr. Sarbah deserves well of his countrymen, who wish to be free citizens and not slaves, *however cultured in European culture*.

Forgive this long ill-written letter. I am writing in the Bay of Biscay, an unrestful place for writing in. I am on my way over to nurse fever cases in South Africa. I may never see West Africa again, but if I do, I hope it will be Liberia. I assure you I shall always feel grateful for the invitation to come there. I know I have been a nuisance. I know I have spoken words in wrath about the educated missionary-made African, and I am glad to hear you will tolerate me, I who admire to get on with the utter Bushman and never sneer or laugh at his native form of religion, a pantheism which I confess is a form of my own religion. I yield to no one in the admiration for Jesus Christ, and I believe in the Divine origin, but the religion His ministers preached I have never been able to believe in.

I hear my friend, Dr. Blyden, is in Liberia; if he is, please ask him if he got the books I sent him to Sierra Leone, Le Bon's *Psychology of People* and another, all right. Please give him my kindest regards, and ask him to write me a line saying how he is to Miss Kingsley, in care of the Standard Bank, Cape Town, South Africa, and believe me, Sir,

Yours gratefully,
M. H. KINGSLEY.

In the editorial article in the same number, stress is rightly laid on "the greatness of the woman and the work she has done," and also, as she would assuredly have wished, on the fact that what she had done for the African he might now do for himself. "One of Africa's deepest needs being manifest," runs the article, "it is now the *imperative duty* of her own sons, having before them an example worthy of emulation, to re-adjust their estranged attitude to aboriginal institutions and life, and in the spirit, and with the ability and sympathy of Mary Kingsley, student, reformer, prophetess, preach and agitate a similar gospel, till the principles for which she bravely fought are firmly established, and the ends recognised and attained."

This letter and the comment upon it seem to lead

naturally to a brief consideration of the character and career of this noble Englishwoman, who has added fresh lustre to a name already honoured among us, and whose premature death is nothing less than a national misfortune.

Not long after her death a friend who knew her well, a man qualified to speak by long experience of men and affairs, summed up the rare combination of overflowing sympathy and intellectual grasp which constituted at once the power and the charm of Mary Kingsley by saying that "she had the brain of a man and the heart of a woman." Speaking of her time in West Africa, she herself said, on one occasion, that she was "doing odd jobs, and trying to understand things." The phrase was characteristically modest, but here again we see how the heart which inspired the "jobs," which were always for some one else's benefit, worked deliberately in concert with the brain which was ever "trying to understand things." Together the two phrases strike the keynote of her life.

In a delightful chapter of autobiography which in May, 1899, she contributed to *M.A.P.*, she revealed how from her earliest childhood she had been of "an inquiring mind," and how she had to a great extent lived "in a great amusing world of my own other people did not know or care about—in the books of my father's library." These books, as those who knew George Kingsley might suppose, were of the most miscellaneous description. His daughter's favourites, she tells us, were Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Johnson's *Robberies and Murders of the most Notorious Pyrates*, *Bayle's Dictionary*. As the child grew older such books as Lockyer's *Solar Physics*, Craik's *Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties*, and *The English Mechanic* played their part in developing her powers of imagination and reflection, and turning them to practical account. "With the aid of the *English Mechanic*," she writes, "I became a handy man," and proceeds humorously to describe experiments not always crowned with success. It was, no doubt, in this time of incubation that was laid the foun-

dation of that all round ability which made one feel that in after life there was almost nothing she could not do. In 1884, when Mary was in her twenty-second year, her parents moved to Cambridge. Here, writes a life-long friend,[1] "the society of cultivated men and women of literature and scholarship, whom she met in company with her father, drew her out, and the shy, original girl gained confidence, and was soon prized for her own sake. Here she continued her mathematics, studied Darwin, Huxley, Lubbock, and Tylor, and the great principles of modern science; here she passed a few of the happiest years of her life, until the shadow of trouble came. That trouble she faced with brave courage and cheerfulness. In the autumn of 1888 her mother, to whom she was tenderly devoted, was attacked by serious illness, and the daughter herself nursed her through all the difficulties of four anxious years." Her father's health also began to fail, and he died of heart disease only a few weeks before his wife's death. During this anxious period the strain upon so young a woman must have been severe indeed, but the previous self-preparation stood her in good stead, and she bore it with the patience, the unselfishness, the unfailing calm and cheerfulness which always distinguished her. Something of this is indicated in the most interesting memoir of her father which she prefixed in 1899 to the collection of his *Notes on Sport and Travel*. And her summary of the period in *M.A.P.* may fitly close this brief reference to her early years, and lead on to the new chapter which opened with the first journey to West Africa, undertaken shortly after the successive deaths in 1892 of her father and mother:—

"It was years of work and watching and anxiety, a narrower life in home interests than ever, and a more hopelessly depressing one, for it was a long losing fight with death all the time. And then, when the fight was lost, when there were no more odd jobs any one wanted me to do at home, I, out of my life in books, found something to do that my father had cared for, something

[1] *Athenæum*, June 23, 1900.

for which I had been taught German, so that I could do for him odd jobs in it. It was the study of early religion and law, and for it I had to go to West Africa, and I went there, proceeding on the even tenour of my way, doing odd jobs, and trying to understand things, pursuing knowledge under difficulties with unbroken devotion."

In a recent lecture she described in rather more detail how West Africa came to be chosen as her special field of study, and it seems worth while to quote the passage here :—

"Now I have said that my motive for going to West Africa was study ; this study was that of the native ideas and practices in religion and law. My reason for taking up this study was a desire to complete a great book my father, George Kingsley, had left at his death unfinished. My father had travelled far and wide and knew the natives of the South Sea Islands and the Red Indians of North America personally. Also he was a scholar in Semitic literature and could easily find out from books what those peoples and the East Indians and Chinese thought about his favourite subject. What the Africans thought about religion and law he could not so easily find out, because he had not visited western Equatorial Africa and because the Africans have not, like the Chinese or the Indians, a great written literature which you can consult. There are a few Europeans who have carefully studied African ideas, but very few. Chief among them is our own Sir A. B. Ellis and the German doctors Baumann, Buchholtz, Bastian, Köhler and Habbe Schleiden, but these eminent men had not given attention to many points essential for my father's work, so I, knowing how much my father wished that book finished, went out after his death to West Africa where all authorities agreed that Africans were at their wildest and worst. It was no desire to get killed and eaten that made me go and associate with the tribes with the worst reputation for cannibalism and human sacrifice ; but just because such tribes were the best for me to study from what they meant by doing such things

"Now you will readily agree that it would have been no good my rushing out to West Africa and saying to the first native I met in a coast town, 'Why are you a cannibal? Why do you kill people at funerals? Why this, that, or the other?' For naturally that African would have said, 'Who are you, and what business is it of yours? and besides I don't do it, my next door neighbour does ; I am good.' That is human nature all the world over. And besides, to get the real African you must go away from the coast towns, and when you are away from the coast towns in a thoroughly wild part

of West Africa you don't irritate the natives more than you can avoid. The climate is unhealthy enough without your making things worse by spoiling people's tempers with rude questions, about their religious and private affairs, particularly if you happen to be, as I was, alone among them, without an armed expedition. Recognising these things I decided to adopt the method of studying the native mind pursued by Habbe Schleiden, who went out to West Africa as a trader. He was not a success as a trader. That so-called 'simple child of nature,' the African, swindled that distinguished scientific man in his trade sadly. But he got what he wanted, a wonderful knowledge of the native mind and ideas, and I followed humbly in his footsteps, avoiding being swindled as much as possible by giving great attention to trade matters before I went in for them.[6]

To what good purpose she made her two journeys to the region which more and more absorbed her attention and affection, her two books, *Travels in West Africa* and the present *West African Studies*, bear sufficient witness. When the *Travels* appeared, it was at once recognised that the writer had a story to tell and knew how to tell it. Her style certainly was unconventional, but it had the rare faculty of holding the reader's interest, so fresh and natural was it, so full of life and humour, and yet conveying so much sound common sense and real wisdom. And into every sentence she wrote she had the wonderful gift of infusing her own personality. In the *Studies* which appeared two years later, she used, as is explained in her own Preface, some of the material collected in her first journey, but much of the book, and especially the striking chapters on Colonial administration, was the fruit of later study and reflection. For her mind was always at work, her sympathies always active, on the many problems which West Africa presented to her, and especially on the relations between the native races and the Europeans who, for purposes of trade or otherwise, had set foot in the country. Indeed, Mary Kingsley's life, during the four years which elapsed between her last return from the West Coast and her departure for the Cape in the early spring of 1900, was one of ceaseless activity, of strenuous physical and intellectual labour. She lectured on her

favourite subject from one end of the kingdom to the other; to the Chambers of Commerce in Liverpool and Manchester, where her services to the cause of West African trade were recognised by formal resolutions after her death; to popular audiences in other towns; at public schools; in village gatherings, and more than once of late to large audiences at the Imperial Institute. She contributed many articles and letters to magazines and weekly journals, and wrote numberless letters to merchants, ethnologists, politicians, native friends, in short to all whom she might hope to influence on behalf of her beneficent schemes for the advantage alike of her own countrymen and of the natives with whom they were called upon to deal. And yet, amid all this activity, constantly hampered as it was by ill-health, she could always find time to help with wise counsel, and with personal assistance and sympathy, those who were "anyways afflicted or distressed." This trait, which on her own showing she inherited from her mother, was at any rate eminently characteristic of her whole career, and tempts one to sum it up in the familiar words, she "went about doing good."

And, as we know, the end of her life was of a piece with the rest. With characteristic modesty she denied that she was going out to South Africa as a nurse, capable as she actually was, and abundantly proved herself, of fulfilling that function. She went, she said, to make herself useful in whatever capacity, and the second part of her object in life, the "trying to understand things" was certainly not absent from her mind on this occasion, as those well know who heard her speak of the causes and possible consequences of the war. On landing in Cape Town she learned that some one was wanted to help in nursing the Boer prisoners at Simonstown. Here was the very kind of "odd job" to appeal to the chivalrous instincts of Mary Kingsley, and she threw herself into it heart and soul. I have it on the authority of Dr. Carré, the medical head of the Palace Hospital at Simonstown, who kindly wrote to me after her death, that what she

did there was nothing less than to turn chaos into order. And yet in the process she made no enemies. Her quiet dignity, her clear, capable mind, her practical ability, her unfailing good humour, her tenderness and sympathy, won for her here, as elsewhere, not only respect but affection from patients and colleagues, from English and Dutch, from those in private and public station. This was abundantly evident when she herself fell too soon a victim to the disease with which she had struggled so valiantly for others. A public funeral, attended by all classes and nationalities, and unique in the experience of the Colony, was accorded to the simple woman who had landed in South Africa for the first time scarcely two months before. The Union Jack covered the coffin of one of the truest patriots that ever lived, as it was borne on a gun-carriage to the torpedo boat which, in accordance with her own characteristic wish, was to commit her mortal remains to the ocean she loved so well. Dr. Carré, under whose orders she had worked so devotedly, wrote of her as of a life-long friend. One of her nursing colleagues, in an outburst of sorrow, expressed the wish that she might have died in Miss Kingsley's stead.

It is for her friends, who have lost in her not only a delightful companion but one who commanded alike their admiration and affection; it is for her countrymen, before whom she held up so high a standard of national honour and duty; it is for those natives of Africa whose best interests she spent herself to serve, to see to it that fitting honour is paid to her memory. Such was the spontaneous feeling which the news of her untimely death evoked from all these classes, as well as from those among whom she laid down her life. The merchants of Liverpool and Manchester, who knew what she had done to call attention to their achievements and necessities, promptly decided to establish in Liverpool a "Mary Kingsley" hospital for the treatment of tropical diseases. Others, who know that her careful study of West African problems had aroused in her a passionate desire to promote a better

understanding between the native races and the Englishmen who come into relations with them, have decided that no nobler monument could be raised to her memory than an attempt to carry on, as far as may be, this beneficent work. The "National Memorial to Mary Kingsley" will therefore comprise, alongside of the hospital, the formation of a "Mary Kingsley Society of West Africa," for the systematic study of native customs and institutions, which, it is hoped, may help to do for English rule in West Africa what by similar methods the Royal Asiatic Society has done to guide to its unequalled success our administration in India. As will be seen by those who read the contents of this volume, and especially the chapters now added to the former *Studies*, the writer's strong conviction was that more than half the difficulties which have arisen in tropical Africa might have been avoided by fuller knowledge of the nature and ideas of the inhabitants with whom we are called upon to deal. Her plea was for a really scientific treatment of racial and political problems, based on accurate observation and sound judgment, not on preconceived notions and national prejudice. The names of those who have issued an appeal for the "Mary Kingsley Society" are enough to show that these views are not visionary, but have the cordial support of leading colonial administrators, of statesmen, of men of science, of merchants, and of journalists. If the appeal meets with a truly national response the lesson of a noble life should bear fruit to the lasting benefit of mankind.

GEORGE A. MACMILLAN.

December, 1900.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

INTRODUCTORY 1

CHAPTER II

SIERRA LEONE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS 30

CHAPTER III

AFRICAN CHARACTERISTICS 53

CHAPTER IV

FISHING IN WEST AFRICA 75

CHAPTER V

FETISH 95

CHAPTER VI

SCHOOLS OF FETISH 115

CHAPTER VII

PAGE

FETISH AND WITCHCRAFT 132

CHAPTER VIII

AFRICAN MEDICINE 153

CHAPTER IX

THE WITCH DOCTOR 169

CHAPTER X

EARLY TRADE IN WEST AFRICA 187

CHAPTER XI

FRENCH DISCOVERY OF WEST AFRICA 213

CHAPTER XII

COMMERCE IN WEST AFRICA 239

CHAPTER XIII

THE CROWN COLONY SYSTEM 256

CHAPTER XIV

THE CROWN COLONY SYSTEM IN WEST AFRICA 267

CHAPTER XV

PAGE
MORE OF THE CROWN COLONY SYSTEM 276

CHAPTER XVI

THE CLASH OF CULTURES 310

CHAPTER XVII

AN ALTERNATIVE PLAN 335

CHAPTER XVIII

AFRICAN PROPERTY 359

CHAPTER XIX

*WEST AFRICAN PROPERTY 377

CHAPTER XX

*AFRICAN RELIGION AND LAW 391

CHAPTER XXI

*IMPERIALISM 415

CHAPTER XXII

*IMPERIALISM IN WEST AFRICA 439

* Not included in the First Edition.

APPENDIX I

PAGE

TRADE GOODS USED IN THE EARLY TRADE WITH AFRICA AS GIVEN BY BARBOT AND OTHER WRITERS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY 459

APPENDIX II

*AN EARLY AFRICAN VOYAGE 478

INDEX 501

* Not included in the First Edition, and, as the MS. was sent home on her voyage to the Cape, probably the writer's last composition.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PORTRAIT OF MARY H. KINGSLEY	*Frontispiece.*	
SANTA CRUZ, TENERIFFE	*To face page*	10
FOR PALM WINE	,,	54
SIRIMBA PLAYERS, CONGO	,,	56
SECRET SOCIETY LEAVING THE SACRED GROVE	,,	58
JENGU DEVIL DANCE OF KING WILLIAM'S SLAVES, SETTE CAMMA, NOVEMBER 9, 1868*	,,	58
BATANGA CANOES	,,	76
FALLS ON THE TONGUE RIVER	,,	84
LOANDA CANOE WITH MAT SAILS	,,	84
ST. PAUL DO LOANDA	,,	86
ROUND A KACONGO CAMP FIRE	,,	88
FANTEE NATIVES OF THE GOLD COAST	,,	116
YORUBA	,,	118
A CALABAR CHIEF	,,	122
NATIVES OF GABOON	,,	126
FJORT NATIVES OF KACONGO AND LOANGO	,,	130
OIL RIVER NATIVES	,,	206

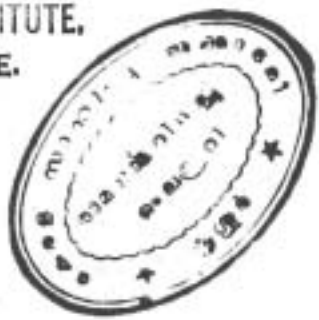
* By permission of R. B. N. Walker, Esq.

ST. PAUL DO LOANDA . . . . . *To face page* 238
CLIFFS AT LOANDA . . . . . ,, 242
DONDO ANGOLA . . . . . ,, 244
TRADING STORES . . . . . ,, 246
ST. PAUL DO LOANDA . . . . . ,, 248
IN AN ANGOLA MARKET . . . . . ,, 252
A MAN OF SOUTH ANGOLA . . . . . ,, 252
A HOUSA . . . . . ,, 359
HOUSE PROPERTY AT KACONGO . . . . . ,, 362
RUBIES OF FERNANDO PO . . . . . ,, 362

MAP

TROPICAL WEST AFRICA . . . . . *To face page* 29

RAMA VARMA RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
TRICHUR, COCHIN STATE.



WEST AFRICAN STUDIES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

Regarding a voyage on a West Coast boat, with some observations on the natural history of mariners never before published; to which is added some description of the habits and nature of the ant and other insects, to the end that the new-comer be informed concerning these things before he lands in Afrik.

THERE are some people who will tell you that the labour problem is the most difficult affair that Africa presents to the student; others give the first place to the influence of civilisation on native races, or to the interaction of the interests of the various white Powers on that continent, or to the successful sanitation of the said continent, or some other high-sounding thing; but I, who have an acquaintance with all these matters, and think them well enough, as intellectual exercises, yet look upon them as slight compared to the problem of the West Coast Boat.

Now life on board a West Coast steamer is an important factor in West African affairs, and its influence is far reaching. It is, indeed, akin to what the Press is in England, in that it forms an immense amount of public opinion. It is on board the steamer that men from one part of West Africa meet men from another part of

West Africa—parts of West Africa are different. These men talk things over together without explaining them, and the consequence is confusion in idea and the darkening of counsel from the ideas so formed being handed over to people at home who practically know no part of the West Coast whatsoever.

I had an example of this the other day, when a lady said to me in an aggrieved tone, after I had been saying a few words on swamps, "Oh, Miss Kingsley, but I thought it was wrong to talk about swamps nowadays, and that Africa was really quite dry. I have a cousin who has been to Accra and he says," &c. That's the way the formation of an erroneous opinion on West Africa gets started. Many a time have I with a scientific interest watched those erroneous opinions coming out of the egg on a West Coast boat. Say, for example, a Gold Coaster meets on the boat a River-man. River-man in course of conversation, states how, "hearing a fillaloo in the yard one night I got up and found the watchman, going to sleep on the top of the ladder, had just lost a leg by means of one crocodile, while another crocodile was kicking up a deuce of a row climbing up the crane." Gold Coaster says, "Tell that to the Marines." River-man says, "Perfect fact, Sir, my place swarms with crocodiles. Why, once, when I was,' &c. &c. Anyhow it ends in a row. The Gold Coaster says, "Sir, I have been 7 years" (or 13 or some impressive number of years) "on the West Coast of Africa, Sir, and I have never seen a crocodile." River-man makes remarks on the existence of a toxic state wherein a man can't see the holes in a ladder, for he knows he's seen hundreds of crocodiles.

I know Gold Coasters say in a trying way when any terrific account of anything comes before them, "Oh, that was down in the Rivers," and one knows what they mean. But don't you go away with the idea that a Gold Coaster cannot turn out a very decent tale; indeed, considering the paucity of their material, they often display the artistic spirit to a most noteworthy degree, but the net result of the conversation on a West African

steamboat is error. Parts of it, like the curate's egg, are quite excellent, but unless you have an acquaintance with the various regions of the Coast to which your various informants refer, you cannot know which is which. Take the above case and analyse it, and you will find it is almost all, on both sides, quite true. I won't go bail for the crocodile up the crane, but for the watchman's leg and the watchman being asleep on the top of the ladder I will, for watchmen will sleep anywhere; and once when I was, &c., I myself saw certainly not less than 70 crocodiles at one time, let alone smelling them, for they do swarm in places and stink always. But on the other hand the Gold Coaster might have remained 7, 13, or any other number of centuries instead of years, in a teetotal state, and yet have never seen a crocodile.

It may seem a reckless thing to say, but I believe that the great percentage of steamboat talk is true; only you must remember that it is not stuff that you can in any way use or rely on unless you know yourself the district from which the information comes, and it must, like all information—like all specimens of any kind—be very carefully ticketed, then and there, as to its giver and its district. In this it is again like the English Press, wherein you may see a statement one day that everything is quite satisfactory, say in Uganda, and in the next issue that there has been a massacre there or some unpleasantness. The two statements have in them the connecting thread of truth, that truth that, according to Fichte, is in all things. The first shows that it is the desire in the official mind that everything should be quite satisfactory to every one; the second, that practically this blessed state has not yet arrived—that is all.

I need not, however, further dwell on this complex phase, and will turn to the high educational value of the West African steamboat to the young Coaster, holding that on the conditions under which the Coaster makes his first voyage out to West Africa largely depends whether or no he takes to the Coast. Strange as it is to me, who love West Africa, there are people who have really been there who have not even liked it in the least.

These people, I fancy, have not been properly brought up in a suitable academy as I was.

Doubtless a P. & O. is a good preparatory school for India, or a Union, or Castle liner for the Cape, or an Empereza Nacioñal simply superb for a Portuguese West Coast Possession, but for the Bights, especially for the terrible Bight of Benin, "where for one that comes out there are forty stay in," I have no hesitation in recommending the West Coast cargo boat. Not one of the best ships in the fleet, mind you; they are well enough to come home in, and so on, but you must go on a steamer that has her saloon aft on your first trip out or you will never understand West Africa.

It was on such a steamer that I made my first voyage out in '93, when, acting under the advice of most eminent men, before whose names European Science trembles, I resolved that the best place to study early religion and law, and collect fishes, was the West Coast of Africa.

On reaching Liverpool, where I knew no one and of which I knew nothing in '93, I found the boat I was to go by was a veteran of the fleet. She had her saloon aft, and I am bound to say her appearance was anything but reassuring to the uninitiated and alarmed young Coaster, depressed by the direful prophecies of deserted friends concerning all things West African. Dirt and greed were that vessel's most obvious attributes. The dirt rapidly disappeared, and by the time she reached the end of her trip out, at Loanda, she was as neat as a new pin, for during the voyage every inch of paint work was scraped and re-painted, from the red below her Plimsoll mark to the uttermost top of her black funnel. But on the day when first we met these things were yet to be. As for her greed, her owners had evidently then done all they could to satisfy her. She was heavily laden, her holds more full than many a better ship's; but no, she was not content, she did not even pretend to be, and shamelessly whistled and squarked for more. So, evidently just to gratify her, they sent her a lighter laden with kegs of gunpowder, and she grunted contentedly as she saw it come alongside. But she was not

really entirely content even then, or satisfied. I don't suppose, between ourselves, any South West Coast boat ever is, and during the whole time I was on her, devoted to her as I rapidly became, I saw only too clearly that the one thing she really cared for was cargo. It was the criterion by which she measured the importance, nay the very excuse for existence, of a port. If she is ever sold to other owners and sent up the Mediterranean, she will anathematise Malta and scorn Naples. "What! no palm oil!" she'll say; "no rubber? Call yourself a port!" and tie her whistle string to a stanchion until the authorities bring off her papers and let her clear away. Every one on board her she infected with a commercial spirit. I am not by nature a commercial man myself, yet under her influence I found myself selling paraffin oil in cases in the Bights: and even to missionaries and Government officials travelling on her in between ports, she suggested the advisability of having out churches, houses, &c., in sections carefully marked with her name.

As we ran down the Irish Channel and into the Bay of Biscay, the weather was what the mariners termed "a bit fresh." Our craft was evidently a wet ship, either because she was nervous and femininely flurried when she saw a large wave coming, or, as I am myself inclined to believe, because of her insatiable mania for shipping cargo. Anyhow, she habitually sat down in the rise of those waves, whereby, from whatever motive, she managed to ship a good deal of the Atlantic Ocean in various sized sections.

Her saloon, as aforesaid, was aft, and I observed it was the duty, in order to keep it dry, of any one near the main door who might notice a ton or so of the fourth element coming aboard, to seize up three cocoa-fibre mats, shut three cabin doors and yell "Bill!" After doing this they were seemingly at full liberty to retire into the saloon and dam the Atlantic Ocean, and remark, "It's a dog's life at sea." I never noticed "Bill" come in answer to this performance, so I was getting to regard "Bill" as an invocation to a weather Ju Ju; but this

was hasty, for one night in the Bay I was roused by a new noise, and on going into the saloon to see what it was, found the stewardess similarly engaged; mutually we discovered, in the dim light—she wasn't the boat to go and throw away money on electric—that it was the piano adrift off its dais, and we steered for it. Very cleverly we fielded *en route* a palm in pot complete, but shipped some beer and Worcester sauce bottles that came at us from the rack over the table, whereby we got a bit messy and sticky about the hair and a trifle cut; nevertheless, undaunted we held our course and seized the instrument, instinctively shouting "Bill," and "Bill" came, in the form of a sandy-haired steward, amiable in nature and striking in costume.

After the first three or four days, a calm despair regarding the fate of my various lost belongings and myself having come on me, and the weather having moderated, I began to make observations on what manner of men my fellow-passengers were. I found only two species of the genus Coaster, the Government official and the trading Agent, were represented; so far we had no missionaries. I decided to observe those species we had quietly, having heard awful accounts of them before leaving England, but to reserve final judgment on them until they had quite recovered from sea-sickness and had had a night ashore. Some of the Agents soon revived sufficiently to give copious information on the dangers and mortality of West Africa to those on board who were going down Coast for the first time, and the captain and doctor chipped in ever and anon with a particularly convincing tale of horror in support of their statements. This used to be the sort of thing. One of the Agents would look at the Captain during a meal-time, and say, "You remember J., Captain?" "Knew him well," says the Captain; "why I brought him out his last time, poor chap!" then follows full details of the pegging-out of J., and his funeral, &c. Then a Government official who had been out before, would kindly turn to a colleague out for the first time, and say, "Brought any dress clothes with

you?" The unfortunate new-comer, scenting an allusion to a more cheerful phase of Coast life, gladly answers in the affirmative.

"That's right," says the interlocutor; "you want them to wear at funerals. Do you know," he remarks, turning to another old Coaster, "my dress trousers did not get mouldy once last wet season."

"Get along," says his friend, "you can't hang a thing up twenty-four hours without its being fit to graze a cow on."

"Do you get anything else but fever down there?" asks a new-comer, nervously.

"Haven't time as a general rule, but I have known some fellows get kraw kraw."

"And the Portuguese itch, abscesses, ulcers, the Guinea worm and the smallpox," observe the chorus calmly.

"Well," says the first answerer, kindly but regretfully, as if it pained him to admit this wealth of disease was denied his particular locality; "they are mostly on the South West Coast." And then a gentleman says parasites are, as far as he knows, everywhere on the Coast, and some of them several yards long. "Do you remember poor C.?" says he to the Captain, who gives his usual answer, "Knew him well. Ah! poor chap, there was quite a quantity of him eaten away, inside and out, with parasites, and a quieter, better living man than C. there never was." "Never," says the chorus, sweeping away the hope that by taking care you may keep clear of such things—the new Coaster's great hope. "Where do you call—?" says a young victim consigned to that port. Some say it is on the South-west, but opinions differ, still the victim is left assured that it is just about the best place on the seaboard of the continent for a man to go to who wants to make himself into a sort of complete hospital course for a set of medical students.

This instruction of the young in the charms of Coast life is the faithfully discharged mission of the old Coasters on steamboats, especially, as aforesaid, at meal times. Desperate victims sometimes determine to keep

the conversation off fever, but to no avail. It is in the air you breath, mentally and physically; one will mention a lively and amusing work, some one cuts in and observes "Poor D. was found dead in bed at C. with that book alongside him." With all subjects it is the same. Keep clear of it in conversation, for even a half hour, you cannot. Far better is it for the young Coaster not to try, but just to collect all the anecdotes and information you can referring to it, and then lie low for a new Coaster of your own to tell them to; and when your own turn comes, as come it will if you haunt the West Coast long enough, to peg out and be poor so and so yourself. For goodness sake die somewhere where they haven't got the cemetery on a hill, because going up a hill in shirt collars, &c., will cause your mourners to peg out too, at least this is the lesson I was taught in that excellent West Coast school.

When, however, there is no new Coaster to instruct on hand, or he is tired for ten minutes of doing it, the old Coaster discourses with his fellow old Coasters on trade products and insects. Every attention should be given to him on these points. On trade products I will discourse elsewhere; but insects it is well that the new comer should know about before he sets foot on Africa. On some West Coast boats excellent training is afforded by the supply of cockroaches on board, and there is nothing like getting used to cockroaches early when your life is going to be spent on the Coast—but I need not detain you with them now, merely remarking that they have none of the modest reticence of the European variety. They are very companionable, seeking rather than shunning human society, nestling in the bunk with you if the weather is the least chilly, and I fancy not averse to light; it is true they come out most at night, but then they distinctly like a bright light, and you can watch them in a tight packed circle round the lamp with their heads towards it, twirling their antennæ at it with evident satisfaction; in fact it's the lively nights those cockroaches have that keep them abed during the day. They are sometimes of great magnitude; I have

been assured by observers of them in factories ashore and on moored hulks that they can stand on their hind legs and drink out of a quart jug, but the most common steamer kind is smaller, as far as my own observations go. But what I do object to in them is, that they fly and feed on your hair and nails and disturb your sleep by so doing; and you mayn't smash them—they make an awful mess on the deck if you do. As for insect powder, well, I'd like to see the insect powder that would disturb the digestion of a West African insect.

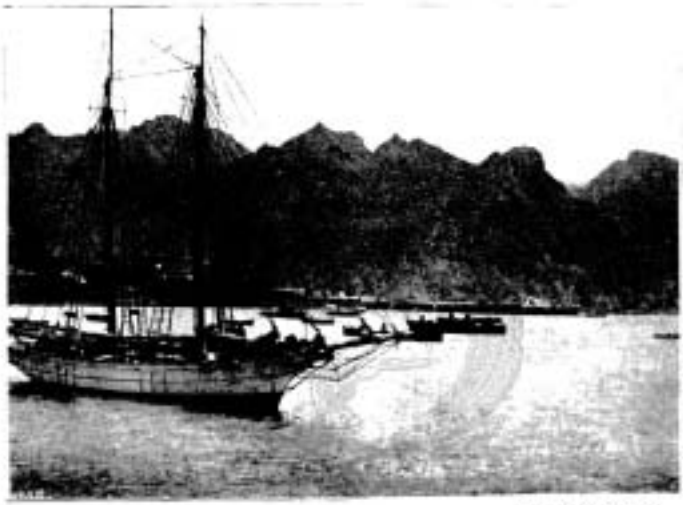
But it's against the insects ashore that you have to be specially warned. During my first few weeks of Africa I took a general, natural historical interest in them with enthusiasm as of natural history; it soon became a mere sporting one, though equally enthusiastic at first. Afterwards a nearly complete indifference set in, unless some wretch aroused a vengeful spirit in me by stinging or biting. I should say, looking back calmly upon the matter, that 75 per cent. of West African insects sting, 5 per cent. bite, and the rest are either permanently or temporarily parasitic on the human race. And undoubtedly one of the many worst things you can do in West Africa is to take any notice of an insect. If you see a thing that looks like a cross between a flying lobster and the figure of Abraxas on a Gnostic gem, do not pay it the least attention, never mind where it is; just keep quiet and hope it will go away—for that's your best chance; you have none in a stand-up fight with a good thorough-going African insect. Well do I remember, at Cabinda, the way insects used to come in round the hanging lamp at dinner time. Mosquitoes were pretty bad there, not so bad as in some other places, but sufficient, and after them hawking came a cloud of dragon-flies, swishing in front of every one's face, which was worrying till you got used to it. Ever and anon a big beetle with a terrific boom on would sweep in, go two or three times round the room and then flop into the soup plate, out of that, shake himself like a retriever and bang into some one's face, then flop on the floor. Orders were then calmly but firmly given to the

steward boys to "catch 'em"; down on the floor went the boys, and an exciting hunt took place which sometimes ended in the capture of the offender, but always seemed to irritate a previously quiet insect population, who forthwith declared war on the human species, and fastened on to the nearest leg. It is best, as I have said, to leave insects alone. Of course you cannot ignore Driver ants, they won't go away, but the same principle reversed is best for them, namely, your going away yourself.

One way and another we talked a good deal of insects as well as fever on the ——, but she herself was fairly free from these until she got a chance of shipping; then, of course, she did her best—with the flea line at Canary, mixed assortment at Sierra Leone, scorpions and centipedes in the Timber ports, heavy cargo of the beetle and mangrove-fly line, with mosquitoes for dunnage, in the Oil Rivers; it was not till she reached Congo—but of that anon.

We duly reached Canary. This port I had been to the previous year on a Castle liner, having, in those remote and dark ages, been taught to believe that Liverpool boats were to be avoided; I was, so far, in a state of mere transition of opinion from this view to the one I at present hold, namely, that Liverpool West African Boats are quite the most perfect things in their way, and, at any rate, good enough for me.

I need not discourse on the Grand Canary; there are many better descriptions of that lovely island, and likewise of its sister, Teneriffe, than I could give you. I could, indeed, give you an account of these islands, particularly "when a West Coast boat is in from South," that would show another side of the island life; but I forbear, because it would, perhaps, cause you to think ill of the West Coaster unjustly; for the West Coaster, when he lands on the island of the Grand Canary homeward bound, and realises he has a good reasonable chance to see his home and England again, is not in a normal state, and prone to fall under the influence of excitement, and display emotions that he would not



[*To face page* 22.

SANTA CRUZ, TENERIFFE.

dream of either on the West Coast itself or in England. Indeed, it is not too much to say that on the Canary Islands a good deal of the erroneous prejudice against West Africa is formed; but this is not the place to go into details on the subject.

It was not until we left Canary that my fellow passengers on the —— realised that I was going to "the Coast." They had most civilly bidden me good-bye when they were ashore on the morning of our arrival at Las Palmas; and they were surprised at my presence on board at dinner, as attentive to their conversation as ever. They explained that they had regarded me at first as a lady missionary, until my failure, during a Sunday service in the Bay of Biscay, to rescue it from the dire confusion into which it had been thrown by an esteemed and able officer and a dutiful but inexperienced Purser, caused them to regard me as only a very early visitor to Canary. Now they required explanation. I said I was interested in Natural History. "Botany," they said. "They had known some men who had come out from Kew but they were all dead now."

I denied a connection with Kew, and in order to give an air of definiteness to my intentions, remembering I had been instructed that "one of the worst things you can do in West Africa is to be indefinite," I said I was interested in the South Antarctic Drift—I was in those days.

They promptly fell into the pit of error that this was a gold mine speculation, and said they had "never heard of such a mine." I attempted to extricate them from this idea, and succeeded, except with a deaf gentleman who kept on sweeping into the conversation with yarns and opinions on gold mines in West Africa, and the awful mortality among people who attended to such things, which naturally led to a prolonged discussion, ending in a general resolution that people who had anything to do with gold mines generally died rather quicker even than men from Kew. Indeed, it took me days to get myself explained, and when it was accomplished I found I had nearly got myself regarded as a

lunatic to go to West Africa for such reasons. But fortunately for me, and for many others who have ventured into their kingdom, the West African merchants are good-hearted, hospitable English gentlemen, who seem to feel it their duty that no harm they can prevent should happen to any one; and my first friends, among them my fellow passengers on the ——, failing in inducing me to return from Sierra Leone, which they strongly advised, did their best to save me by means of education. The things they thought I "really ought to know" would make wild reading if published in extenso. Led by the kindest and most helpful of captains, they poured in information, and I acquired a taste for "facts" —any sort of facts about anything—a taste when applied to West African facts, that I fancy ranks with that for collecting venomous serpents; but to my listening to everything that was told me by my first instructors, and believing in it, undoubtedly I have often owed my life, and countless times have been enabled to steer neatly through shoaly circumstances ashore.

Our captain was not a man who would deliberately alarm a new-comer, or shock any one, particularly a lady; indeed, he deliberately attempted to avoid so doing. He held it wrong to dwell on the dark side of Coast life, he said, "because youngsters going out were frequently so frightened on board the boats that they died as soon as they got on shore of the first cold they got in the head, thinking it was Yellow Jack"; so he always started conversation at meal times with anecdotes of his early years on an ancestral ranch in America. One great charm about "facts" is that you never know but what they may come in useful; so I eagerly got up a quantity of very strange information on the conduct of the American cow. He would then wander away among the China Seas or the Indian Ocean, and I could pass an examination on the social habits of captains of sailing vessels that ran to Bombay in old days. Sometimes the discourse visited the South American ports, and I took on information that will come in very handy should I ever find myself wandering about the streets of

Callao after dark, searching for a tavern. But the turn that serious conversation always drifted into was the one that interested me most, that relating to the Coast. Particularly interesting were those tales of the old times and the men who first established the palm-oil trade.

They were, many of them, men who had been engaged in the slave trade, and on the suppression thereof they turned their attention to palm oil, to which end their knowledge of the locality and of the native chiefs and their commercial methods was of the greatest help. Their ideas were possibly not those at present in fashion, but the courage and enterprise those men displayed under the most depressing and deadly conditions made me proud of being a woman of the nation that turned out the "Palm-oil ruffians"—Drake, Hawkins, the two Roberts, Frobisher and Hudson—it is as good as being born a foreign gentleman.

There was one of these old Coasters of the palm oil ruffian type who especially interested me. He is dead now. For the matter of that he died at a mature age the year I was born, and I am in hopes of collecting facts sufficient to enable me to publish his complete biography. He lived up a creek, threw boots at leopards, and "had really swell spittoons, you know, shaped like puncheons, and bound with brass." I am sure it is unnecessary for me to mention his name.

Two of the old Coasters never spoke unless they had something useful and improving to say. They were Scotch; indeed, most of us were that trip, and I often used to wonder if the South Atlantic Ocean were broad enough for the accent of the "a," or whether strange sounds would ever worry and alarm Central America and the Brazils. For general social purposes these silent ones used coughs, and the one whose seat was always next to mine at table kept me in a state of much anxiety, for I used to turn round, after having been riveted to the captain's conversation for minutes, and find him holding some dish for me to help myself from; he never took the least notice of my apologies, and I felt he had made up his mind that, if I did it again, he

would take me by the scruff of my neck some night and drop me overboard. He was an alarmingly powerfully built man, and I quite understood the local African tribe wishing to have him for a specimen. Some short time before he had left for home last trip, they had attempted to acquire his head for their local Ju Ju house, from mixed æsthetic and religious reasons. In a way, it was creditable of them, I suppose, for it would have caused them grave domestic inconvenience to have removed thereby, at one fell swoop, their complete set of tradesmen; and as a fellow collector of specimens I am bound to admit the soundness of their methods of collecting! Wishing for this gentleman's head they shot him in the legs. I have never gone in for collecting specimens of hominidae but still a recital of the incident did not fire me with a desire to repeat their performance; indeed, so discouraged was I by their failure that I hesitated about asking him for his skeleton when he had quite done with it, though it was gall and wormwood to think of a really fine thing like that falling into the hands of another collector.

The run from Canary to Sierra Leone takes about a week. That part of it which lies in the track of the N.E. Trade Winds, *i.e.*, from Canary to Cape Verde, makes you believe Mr. Kipling when he sang—

> "There are many ways to take
> Of the eagle and the snake,
> And the way of a man with a maid;
> But the sweetest way for me
> Is a ship upon the sea
> On the track of the North-East trade."

was displaying, gracefully, a sensible choice of things; but you only feel this outward bound to the West Coast. When you come up from the Coast, fever stricken, homeward bound, you think otherwise. I do not mean to say that owing to a disintegrating moral effect of West Africa you wish to pursue the other ways mentioned in the stanza, but you do wish the Powers above would send that wind to the Powers below and

get it warmed. Alas! it is in this Trade Wind zone that most men die, coming up from the Coast sick with fever, and it is to the blame of the Trade Wind that you see obituary notices—"of fever after leaving Sierra Leone." Nevertheless, outward bound the thing is delightful, and dreadfully you feel its loss when you have run through it as you close in to the African land by Cape Verde. At any rate I did; and I began to believe every bad thing I had ever heard of West Africa, and straightway said to myself, what every man has said to himself who has gone there since Hanno of Carthage, "Why was I such a fool as to come to such an awful place?" It is the first meeting with the hot breath of the Bights that tries one; it is the breath of Death himself to many. You feel when first you meet it you have done with all else; not alone is it hot, but it smells—smells like nothing else. It does not smell all it can then; by and by, down in the Rivers, you get its perfection, but off Cape Verde you have to ask yourself, "Can I live in this or no?" and you have to leave it, like all other such questions, to Allah, and go on.

We passed close in to Cape Verde, which consists of rounded hills having steep bases to the sea. From these bases runs out a low, long strip of sandy soil, which is the true cape. Beyond, under water, runs out the dangerous Almadia reef, on which were still, in '93, to be seen the remains of the *Port Douglas*, who was wrecked there on her way to Australia in '92. Her passengers were got ashore and most kindly treated by the French officers of Senegal; and finally, to the great joy and relief of their rescuers, the said passengers were fetched away by an English vessel, and taken to what England said was their destination and home, Australia, but what France regarded as merely a stage on their journey to Hell, to which port they had plainly been consigned.

It was just south of Cape Verde that I met my first tornado. The weather had been wet in violent showers all the morning and afternoon. Our old Coasters took but little notice of it, resigning themselves to saturation

without a struggle, previous experience having taught them it was the best thing to do, dryness being an unattainable state during the wet season, and "worrying one's self about anything one of the worst things you can do in West Africa." So they sat on deck calmly smoking, their new flannel suits, which were donned after leaving the trade winds, shrinking, and their colours running on to the other deck, uncriticised even by the first officer. He was charging about shouting directions and generally making that afternoon such a wild, hurrying fuss about "getting in awnings," "tricing up all loose gear," such as deck chairs, and so on, to permanent parts of the ——, that, as nothing beyond showers had happened, and there was no wind, I began to feel most anxious about his mental state. But I soon saw that this activity was the working of a practical prophetic spirit in the man, and these alarms and excursions of his arose from a knowledge of what that low, arch of black cloud coming off the land meant.

We were surrounded by a wild, strange sky. Indeed there seemed to be two skies, one upper, and one lower; for parts of it were showing evidences of terrific activity, others of a sublime, utterly indifferent calm. At one part of our horizon were great columns of black cloud, expanding and coalescing at their capitals. These were mounted on a background of most exquisite pale green. Away to leeward was a gigantic black cloud-mountain, across whose vast face were bands and wreaths of delicate white and silver clouds, and from whose grim depths every few seconds flashed palpitating, fitful, livid lightnings. Striding towards us across the sea came the tornado, lashing it into spray mist with the tremendous artillery of its rain, and shaking the air with its own thunder-growls. Away to windward leisurely boomed and grumbled a third thunderstorm, apparently not addressing the tornado but the cloud-mountain, while in between these phenomena wandered strange, wild winds, made out of lost souls frightened and wailing to be let back into Hell, or taken care of somehow by some one. This sort of thing naturally excited the sea, and all

together excited the ——, who, not being built so much for the open and deep sea as for the shoal bars of West African rivers, made the most of it.

In a few seconds the wind of the tornado struck us, screaming through the rigging, eager for awnings or any loose gear, but foiled of its prey by the first officer, who stood triumphantly on a heap of them, like a defiant hen guarding her chickens.

Some one really ought to write a monograph on the natural history of mariners. They are valuable beings, and their habits are exceedingly interesting. I myself, being already engaged in the study of other organisms, cannot undertake the work; however, I place my observations at the disposal of any fellow naturalist who may have more time, and certainly will have more ability.

The sailor officer (*Nauta pelagius vel officinalis*) is metamorphic. The stage at which the specimen you may be observing has arrived is easily determined by the band of galoon round his coat cuff; in the English form the number of gold stripes increasing in direct ratio with rank. The galoon markings of the foreign species are frequently merely decorative, and in many foreign varieties only conditioned by the extent of surface available to display them and the ability of the individual to acquire the galoon wherewith to decorate himself.

The English third officer, you will find, has one stripe, the second two, the first three, and the *imago*, or captain, four, the upper one having a triumphant twist at the top.

You may observe, perhaps, about the ship sub-varieties, having a red velvet, or a white or blue velvet band on the coat cuff; these are respectively the Doctor, Purser, and chief engineer; but with these sub-varieties I will not deal now, they are not essentially marine organisms, but akin to the amphibia.

The metamorphosis is as clearly marked in the individual as in the physical characteristics. A third officer is a hard-working individual who has to do anything that the other officers do not feel inclined to, and therefore rarely has time to wash. He in course of time

becomes second officer, and the slave of the hatch. During this period of his metamorphosis he feels no compunction whatever in hauling out and dumping on the deck burst bacon barrels or leaking lime casks, actions which, when he reaches the next stage of development, he will regard as undistinguishable in a moral point of view from a compound commission of the seven deadly sins. For the deck, be it known, is to the first officer the most important thing in the cosmogony, and there is probably nothing he would not sacrifice to its complexion. One that I had the pleasure of knowing once lamented to me that he was not allowed by his then owners to spread a layer of ripe pineapples upon his precious idol, and let them be well trampled in and then lie a few hours, for this he assured me gave a most satisfactory bloom to a deck's complexion. Yet when this same man becomes a captain and grows another stripe round his cuffs, he no longer takes an active part in the ship's household affairs, that is his first officer's business, the ship's husband's affair; and should he have an inefficient First the captain expects men and nations to sympathise with him, just as a lady expects to be sympathised with over a bad housemaid.

There are, however, two habits which are constant to all the species through each stage of transformation from roust-about to captain. One is a love of painting. I have never known an officer or captain who could pass a paint-pot, with the brush sticking temptingly out, without emotion. While, as for Jack, the happiest hours he knows seemingly are those he spends sitting on a slung plank over the side of his ocean home, with his bare feet dangling a few feet above the water as tempting bait for sharks, and the tropical sun blazing down on him and reflected back at him from the iron ship's side and from the oily ocean beneath. Then he carols forth his amorous lay, and shouts, "Bill, pass that paint-pot" in his jolliest tones. It is very rarely that a black seaman is treated to a paint-pot; all they are allowed to do is to knock off the old stuff, which they do in the nerveless way the African does most handicraft. The greatest

dissipation of the black hands department consists in being allowed to knock the old stuff off the steam-pipe covers, donkey, and funnel. This is a delicious occupation, because, firstly, you can usually sit while doing it, and secondly, you can make a deafening din and sing to it.

The other habit and the more widely known is the animistic view your seaman takes of Nature. Every article that is to a landsman an article and nothing more, is to him an individual with a will and mind of his own. I myself believe there is something in it. I feel sure that a certain hawser on board the —— had a weird influence on the minds of all men who associated with it. It was used at Liverpool coming out of dock, but owing to the absence of harbours on the Coast it was not required again until it tied our ocean liner up to a tree stump at Boma, on the Congo. Nevertheless it didn't suit that hawser's views to be down below in the run and see nothing of life. It insisted on remaining on deck, and the officers gave in to it and said, "Well, perhaps it was better so, it would rot if it went down below," so some days it abode on the quarter-deck, some days on the main, and now and again it would condescend to lie on the fo'castle head in the sun. It had too its varying moods of tidiness, now neat and dandy coiled, now dishevelled and slummocky after association with the Kruboys.

It is almost unnecessary to remark that the relationship between the first officer and the chief engineer is rarely amicable. I certainly did once hear a first officer pray especially for a chief engineer all to himself under his breath at a Sunday service; but I do not feel certain that this was a display of true affection. I am bound to admit that "the engineer is messy," which is magnanimous of me, because I had almost always a row of some kind on with the first officer, owing to other people upsetting my ink on his deck, whereas I have never fallen out with an engineer—on the contrary, two chief engineers are amongst the most valued friends I possess.

The worst of it is that no amount of experience will drive it into the head of the first officer that the engineer will want coal—particularly and exactly when the ship has just been thoroughly scrubbed and painted to go into port. I have not been at sea so long as many officers, yet I know that you might as well try and get a confirmed dipsomaniac past a grog shop as the engineer past, say the Canary Coaling Company; indeed he seems to smell the Dakar coal, and hankers after it when passing it miles out to sea. Then, again, if the engineer is allowed to have a coal deposit in the forehold it is a fresh blow and grief to the first officer to find he likes to take them as Mrs. Gamp did her stimulant, when she "feels dispoged," whether the deck has just been washed down or no.

The cook, although he always has a blood feud on with the engineer concerning coals for the galley fire, which should endear him to the first officer, is morally a greater trial to the first than he is to his other victims. You see the cook has a grease tub, and what that means to the deck in a high sea is too painful to describe. So I leave the first officer with his pathetic and powerful appeals to the immortal gods to be told why it is his fate to be condemned to this "dog's life on a floating Hanwell lunatic asylum," commending him to the sympathetic consideration of all good housewives, for only they can understand what that dear good man goes through.

After we passed Cape Verde we ran into the West African wet season rain sheet. There ought to be some other word than rain for that sort of thing. We have to stiffen this poor substantive up with adjectives, even for use with our own thunderstorms, and as is the morning dew to our heaviest thunder "torrential downpour of rain," so is that to the rain of the wet season in West Africa. For weeks it came down on us that voyage in one swishing, rushing cataract of water. The interspaces between the pipes of water—for it did not go into details with drops—were filled with gray mist, and as this rain struck the sea it kicked up such a water dust

that you saw not the surface of the sea round you, but only a mist sea gliding by. It seemed as though we had left the clear cut world and entered into a mist universe. Sky, air, and sea were all the same, as our vessel swept on in one plane, just because she capriciously preferred it. Many days we could not see twenty yards from the ship. Once or twice another vessel would come out of the mist ahead, slogging past us into the mist behind, visible in our little water world for a few minutes only as a misty thing, and then we leisurely tramped on alone "o'er the viewless, hueless deep," with our horizon alongside.

If you cleared your mind of all prejudice the thing was really not uncomfortable, and it seemed restful to the mind. As I used to be sitting on deck every one who came across me would say, "Wet, isn't it? Well, you see this is the wet season on the Coast"—or, "Damp, isn't it? Well, you see this is the wet season on the Coast"—and then they went away, and, I believe slept for hours exhausted by their educational efforts. After this they would come on deck and sit in their respective chairs, smoking, save that irrepressible deaf gentleman, who spent his time squirrel-like between vivid activity and complete quiescence. You might pass the smoking room door and observe the soles of his shoes sticking out off the end of the settee with an air of perfect restful calm hovering over them, as if the owner were hibernating for the next six months. Within two minutes after this an uproar on the poop would inform the experienced ear that he was up and about again, and had found some one asleep on a chair and attacked him.

It was during one of these days, furnishing reminiscences of Noah's flood, that conversation turned suddenly on Driver ants. One of the silent men, who had been sitting for an hour or so with a countenance indicative of a contemplative acceptance of the penitential psalms, roused by one of the deaf man's rows, observed, "Paraffin is good for Driver ants." "Oh," said the deaf gentleman as he sat suddenly down on my ink-pot,

which, for my convenience, was on a chair, "you wait till you get them up your legs, or sit down among them as I saw Smith, when he was tired clearing bush. They took the tire out of him, he live for scratch one time. Smith was a pocket circus. You should have seen him get clear of his divided skirt. Oh lor! what price paraffin?"

The conversation on the Driver ant now became general. As far as I remember, Mr. Burnand, who in *Happy Thoughts* and *My Health*, gave much information, curious and interesting, on earwigs and wasps, omitted this interesting insect. So, perhaps, a *précis* of the information I obtained may be interesting. I learnt that the only thing to do when you have got them on you is to adopt the course of action pursued by Brer Fox on that occasion when he was left to himself enough to go and buy ointment from Brer Rabbit, namely, make "a burst for the creek," water being the quickest thing to make them leave go. Unfortunately, the first time I had occasion to apply this short and easy method with the ant was when I was strolling about by Bell-Town with a white gentleman and his wife, and we strolled into Drivers. There were only two water-barrels in the vicinity, and my companions, being more active than myself, occupied them.

While in West Africa you should always keep an eye lifting for Drivers. You can start doing it as soon as you land, which will postpone the catastrophe, not avoid it; for the song of the West Coaster to his enemy is truly, "Some day, some day, some day I shall meet you; Love, I know not when nor how." Perhaps, therefore, this being so, and watchfulness a strain when done deliberately, and worrying one of the worst things you can do in West Africa, it may be just as well for you to let things slide down the time-stream until Fate sends a column of the wretches up your legs. This experience will remain "indelibly limned on the tablets of your mind when a yesterday has faded from its page," or, as the modern school of psychologists would have it, "The affair will be brought to the notice of your subliminal

consciousness, and that part of your mind will watch for Drivers without worrying you, and an automatic habit will be induced that will cause you never to let more than one eye roam spell-bound over the beauties of the African landscape; the other will keep fixed, turned to the soil at your feet.

The Driver is of the species *Ponera*, and is generally referred to the species *anomma arcens*. The females and workers of these ants are provided with stings as well as well devoloped jaws. They work both for all they are worth, driving the latter into your flesh, enthusiastically up to the hilt; they then remain therein, keeping up irritation when you have hastily torn their owner off in response to a sensation that is like that of red-hot pincers. The full-grown worker is about half an inch long, and without ocelli even. Yet one of the most remarkable among his many crimes is that he will always first attack the eyes of any victim. These creatures seem to have no settled home; no man has seen the beginning or end, as far as I know, of one of their long trains. As you are watching the ground you see a ribbon of glistening black, one portion of it lost in one clump of vegetation, the other in another, and on looking closer you see that it is an *acies instituta* of Driver ants. If you stir the column up with a stick they make a peculiar fizzing noise, and open out in all directions in search of the enemy, which you take care they don't find.

These ants are sometimes also called "visiting ants," from their habit of calling in quantities at inconvenient hours on humanity. They are fond of marching at night, and drop in on your house usually after you have gone to bed. I fancy, however, they are about in the daytime as well, even in the brightest weather; but it is certain that it is in dull, wet weather, and after dusk, that you come across them most on paths and open spaces. At other times and hours they make their way among the tangled ground vegetation.

Their migrations are infinite; and they create some of the most brilliant sensations that occur in West Africa,

replacing to the English exile there his lost burst water pipes of winter, and such-like things, while they enforce healthy and brisk exercise upon the African.

I will not enter into particulars about the customary white man's method of receiving a visit of Drivers, those methods being alike ineffective and accompanied by dreadful language. Barricading the house with a rim of red hot ashes, or a river of burning paraffin, merely adds to the inconvenience and endangers the establishment.

The native method with the Driver ant is different: one minute there will be peace in the simple African home, the heavy-scented hot night air broken only by the rhythmic snores and automatic side slaps of the family, accompanied outside by a chorus of cicadas and bull frogs. Enter the Driver—the next moment that night is thick with hurrying black forms, little and big, for the family, accompanied by rats, cockroaches, snakes, scorpions, centipedes, and huge spiders, animated by the one desire to get out of the visitors' way, fall helter-skelter into the street, where they are joined by the rest of the inhabitants of the village, for the ants when they once start on a village usually make a regular house-to-house visitation. I mixed myself up once in a delightful knockabout farce near Kabinda, and possibly made the biggest fool of myself I ever did. I was in a little village, and out of a hut came the owner and his family and all the household parasites pell mell, leaving the Drivers in possession; but the mother and father of the family, when they recovered from this unwonted burst of activity, showed such a lively concern, and such unmistakable signs of anguish at having left something behind them in the hut, that I thought it must be the baby. Although not a family man myself, the idea of that innocent infant perishing in such an appalling manner roused me to action, and I joined the frenzied group, crying, "Where him live?" "In him far corner for floor!" shrieked the distracted parents, and into that hut I charged. Too true! There in the corner lay the poor little thing, a mere inert black mass, with hundreds of cruel Drivers already swarming upon it.

To seize it and give it to the distracted mother was, as the reporter would say, "the work of an instant." She gave a cry of joy, and dropped it instantly into a water barrel, where her husband held it down with a hoe, chuckling contentedly. Shiver not, my friend, at the callousness of the Ethiopian; that there thing wasn't an infant—it was a ham!

These ants clear a house completely of all its owner's afflictions in the way of vermin, killing and eating all they can get hold of. They will also make short work of any meat they come across, but don't care about flour or biscuits. Like their patron Mephistopheles, however, they do not care for carrion, nor do they destroy furniture or stuffs. Indeed they are typically West African, namely, good and bad mixed. In a few hours they leave the house again on their march through the Ewigkeit, which they enliven with criminal proceedings. Yet in spite of the advantage they confer on humanity, I believe if the matter were put to the human vote, Africa would decide to do without the Driver ant. Mankind has never been sufficiently grateful to its charwomen who, like these insect equivalents, do their tidying up at supremely inconvenient times. I remember an incident at one place in the Lower Congo, where I had been informed that "cork fever" was epidemic in a severe form among the white population. I was returning to quarters from a beetle hunt, in pouring rain; it was, as it often is, "the wet season," &c., when I saw a European gentleman about twenty yards from his comfortable-looking house, seated on a chair, clad in a white cotton suit, umbrellaless, and with the water running off him as if he was in a douche bath. I had never seen a case of cork fever, but I had heard such marvellous and quaint tales of its symptoms that I thought—well, perhaps, anyhow, I would not open up conversation. To my remorse he said, as I passed him, "Drivers." Inwardly apologising, I outwardly commiserated him, and we discoursed. It was on this occasion that I saw a mantis, who is by way of being a very pretty pirate on his own account, surrounded by a mob of the blind hurrying Drivers who,

I may remark, always attack like Red Indians in open order. That mantis perfectly well knew his danger, but was as cool as a cucumber, keeping quite quiet and lifting his legs out of the way of the blind enemies around him. But the chances of keeping six legs going clear, for long, among such brutes without any of them happening on one, were small, even though he only kept three on the ground at one time. So, being a devotee of personal courage, I rescued him—whereupon he bit me for my pains. Why didn't he fly? How can you fly, I should like to know, unless you have a jumping off place?

Drivers are indeed dreadful. I was at one place where there had been a white gentleman and a birthday party in the evening; he stumbled on his way home and went to sleep by the path side, and in the morning there was only a white gentleman's skeleton and clothes.

However, I will dwell no more on them now. Wretches that they are, they have even in spirit pursued me to England, causing a critic to observe that *brevi spatio interjecto* is my only Latin, whereas the matter is this. I was once in distinguished society in West Africa that included other ladies. We had a distinguished native gentleman, who had had an European education, come to tea with us. The conversation turned on Drivers, for one of the ladies had the previous evening had her house invaded by them at midnight. She snatched up a blanket, wrapped herself round with it, unfortunately allowed one corner thereof to trail, whereby it swept up Drivers, and awful scenes followed. Then our visitor gave us many reminiscences of his own, winding up with one wherein he observed "*brevi spatio interjecto*, ladies; off came my breeches." After this we ladies all naturally used this phrase to describe rapid action.

There is another ant, which is commonly called the red Driver, but it is quite distinct from the above-mentioned black species. It is an unwholesome-looking, watery-red thing with long legs, and it abides among trees and bushes. An easy way of obtaining specimens of this ant is to go under a mango or other fruit tree

and throw your cap at the fruit. You promptly get as many of these insects as the most ardent naturalist could desire, its bite being every bit as bad as that of the black Driver.

These red ones build nests with the leaves of the tree they reside on. The leaves are stuck together with what looks like spiders' webs. I have seen these nests the size of an apple, and sent a large one to the British Museum, but I have been told of many larger nests than I have seen. These ants, unfortunately for me who share the taste, are particularly devoted to the fruit of the rubber vine, and also to that of a poisonous small-leaved creeping plant that bears the most disproportionately-sized spiny, viscid, yellow fruit. It is very difficult to come across specimens of either of these fruits that have not been eaten away by the red Driver.

It is a very fascinating thing to see the strange devices employed by many kinds of young seedlings and saplings to keep off these evidently unpopular tenants. They chiefly consist in having a sheath of exceedingly slippery surface round the lower part of the stem, which the ants slide off when they attempt to climb. I used to spend hours watching these affairs. You would see an ant dash for one of these protected stems as if he were a City man and his morning train on the point of starting from the top of the plant stem. He would get up half an inch or so because of the dust round the bottom helping him a bit, then, getting no holding-ground, off he would slip, and falling on his back, desperately kick himself right side up, and go at it again as if he had heard the bell go, only to meet with a similar rebuff. The plants are most forbearing teachers, and their behaviour in every way a credit to them. I hope that they may in time have a moral and educational effect on this overrated insect, enabling him to realise how wrong it is for him to force himself where he is not welcome; but a few more thousand years, I fear, will elapse before the ant is anything but a chuckle-headed, obstinate wretch. Nothing nowadays but his happening to fall off with his head in the direction of

some other vegetable frees the slippery plant from his attempts. To this other something off he rushes, and if it happens to be a plant that does not mind him up he goes, and I have no doubt congratulates himself on having carried out his original intentions, understanding the world, not being the man to put up with nonsense and all that sort of thing, whereas it is the plant that manages him. Some plants don't mind ants knocking about among the grown-up leaves, but will not have them with the infants, and so cover their young stuff with a fur or down wherewith the ant can do nothing. Others, again, keep him and feed him with sweetstuff, so that he should keep off other enemies from its fruit, &c. But I have not space to sing in full the high intelligence of West African vegetation, and I am no botanist; yet one cannot avoid being struck by it, it is so manifold and masterly.

Before closing these observations I must just mention that tiny, sandy-coloured abomination *Myriaica molesta*. In South West Africa it swarms, giving a quaint touch to domestic arrangements. No reckless putting down of basin, tin, or jam-pot there, least of all of the sugar-basin, unless the said sugar-basin is one of those commonly used in those parts, of rough, violet-coloured glass, with a similar lid. Since I left South West Africa I have read some interesting observations of Sir John Lubbock's on the dislike of ants to violet colour. I wonder if the Portuguese of Angola observed it long ago and adopted violet glass for basins, or was it merely accidental and empirical? I suspect the latter, or they would use violet glass for other articles. As it is, everything eatable in a house there is completely insulated in water—moats of water with a dash of vinegar in it—to guard it from the ants from below. To guard from the ants from above, the same breed and not a bit better, eatables are kept in swinging safes at the end of coir rope recently tarred. But when, in spite of these precautions, or from the neglect of them, you find, say your sugar, a brown, busy mass, just stand it in the full glare of the sun. Sun is a thing no ant likes, I believe,

and it is particularly distasteful to ants with pale complexions; and so you can see them tear themselves away from their beloved sugar and clear off like a Hyde Park meeting smitten by a thunderstorm.

This kind of ant, or a nearly allied species, is found in houses in England, where it is supposed they have been imported from the Brazils or West Indies in 1828. Possibly the Brazils got it from South West Africa, with which they have had a trade since the sixteenth century, most of the Brazil slaves coming out of Congo. It is unlikely that the importation was the other way about; for exotic things, whether plants or animals, do not catch on in Western Africa as they do in Australia. In the former land everything of the kind requires constant care to keep it going at all, and protect it from the terrific local circumstances. It is no use saying to animal or vegetable, "There is room for all in Africa"—for Africa, that is Africa properly so called—Equatorial West Africa—is full up with its own stuff now, crowded and fighting an internecine battle with the most marvellous adaptations to its environment.

CHAPTER II

SIERRA LEONE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

Concerning the perils that beset the navigator in the Baixos of St. Ann, with some description of the country between the Sierra Leone and Cape Palmas and the reasons wherefrom it came to be called the Pepper, Grain, or Melegueta Coast.

IT was late evening-time when the —— reached that part of the South Atlantic Ocean where previous experience and dead reckoning led our captain to believe that Sierra Leone existed. The weather was too thick to see ten yards from the ship, so remembering certain captains who, under similar circumstances, failing to pick up the light on Cape Sierra Leone, had picked up the Carpenter Rock with their keels instead, he let go his anchor, and kept us rolling about outside until the morning came. Slipperty slop, crash! slipperty slop, crash! went all loose gear on board all night long; and those of the passengers who went in for that sort of thing were ill from the change of motion. The mist, our world, went gently into grey, and then black, growing into a dense darkness filled with palpable, woolly, wet air, thicker far than it had been before. This, my instructors informed me, was caused by the admixture of the "solid malaria coming off the land."

However, morning came at last, and even I was on deck as it dawned, and was rewarded for my unwonted activity by a vision of beautiful, definite earth-form dramatically unveiled. No longer was the —— our

only material world. The mist lifted itself gently off, as it seemed, out of the ocean, and then separated before the morning breeze; one great mass rolling away before us upwards, over the land, where portions of it caught amongst the forests of the mountains and stayed there all day, while another mass went leisurely away to the low Bullham shore, from whence it came again after sunset to join the mountain and the ocean mists as they drew down and in from the sea, helping them to wrap up Freetown, Sierra Leone and its lovely harbour for the night.

It was with a thrill of joy that I looked on Freetown harbour for the first time in my life. I knew the place so well, Yes; there were all the bays, Kru, English and Pirate; and the mountains, whose thunder rumbling caused Pedro do Centra to call the place Sierra Leona when he discovered it in 1462. And had not my old friend, Charles Johnson, writing in 1724, given me all manner of information about it during those delicious hours rescued from school books and dedicated to a most contentious study of *A General History of Robberies and Murders of the most Notorious Pyrates?* That those bays away now on my right hand "were safe and convenient for cleaning and watering;" and so on, and there rose up before my eyes a vision of the society ashore here in 1724 that lived "very friendly with the natives—being thirty Englishmen in all; men who in some part of their lives had been either privateering, buccaneering, or pirating, and still retain and have the riots and humours common to that sort of life." Hard by, too, was Bence Island, where, according to Johnson, "there lives an old fellow named *Crackers* (his true name he thinks fit to conceal), and who was formerly a noted buccaneer; he keeps the best house in the place, has two or three guns before his door with which he salutes his friends the pyrates when they put in, and lives a joval life with them all the while they are there." Alas! no use to me was the careful list old Johnson had given me of the residents. They were all dead now, and I could not go ashore and

hunt up "Peter Brown" or "John Jones," who had "one long boat and an Irish young man." Social things were changed in Freetown, Sierra Leone; but only socially, for the old description of it is, as far as scenery goes, correct to-day, barring the town. Whether or no everything has changed for the better is not my business to discuss here, nor will I detain you with any description of the town, as I have already published one after several visits, with a better knowledge than I had on my first call there.

On one of my subsequent visits I fell in with Sierra Leone receiving a shock. We were sitting, after a warm and interesting morning spent going about the town talking trade, in the low long pleasant room belonging to the Coaling Company whose windows looked out over an eventful warehouse yard; for therein abode a large dog-faced baboon, who shied stones and sticks at boys and any one who displeased him, pretty nearly as well as a Flintshire man. Also in the yard were a large consignment of kola nuts packed as usual in native-made baskets, called bilys, lined inside with the large leaves of a Ficus, and our host was explaining to my mariner companions their crimes towards this cargo, while they defended themselves with spirit. It seemed that this precious product if not kept on deck made a point of heating and then going mildewed; while, if you did keep it on deck, either the first officer's minions went fooling about it with the hose, which made it swell up and burst and ruined it, or left it in unmitigated sun, which shrivelled it—and so on. This led, naturally, to a general conversation on cargo between the mariners and the merchants, during which some dreadful things were said about the way matches arrived, in West Africa and other things, shipped at shipper's own risk, let alone the way trade suffered by stowing hams next the boilers. Of course the other side was a complete denial of these accusations, but the affair was too vital for any of us to attend to a notorious member of the party who kept bothering us "to get up and look at something queer over King Tom."

Now it was market day in Freetown; and market day there has got more noise to the square inch in it than most things. You feel when you first meet it that if it were increased a little more it would pass beyond the grasp of human ear, like the screech of that whistle they show off at the Royal Society's Conversazione. However, on this occasion the market place sent up an entire compound yell, still audible; and we rose as one man as the portly housekeeper, followed by the small but able steward, burst into the room, announcing, in excited tones, "Oh! the town be took by locusts! The town be took by locusts!" (*D.C. fortissimo.*) And we attended to the incident; ousting the reporter of "the queer thing over King Tom" from the window, and ignoring his "I told you so," because he hadn't.

This was the first cloud of locusts that had come right into the town in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, though they occasionally raid the country away to the North. I am informed that when the chiefs of the Western Soudan do not give sufficient gifts to the man who is locust king and has charge of them—keeping them in holes in the desert of Sahara—he lets them out in revenge. Certainly that year he let them out with a vengeance, for when I was next time down Coast in the Oil Rivers I was presented with specimens that had been caught in Old Calabar and kept as big curios.

This Freetown swarm came up over the wooded hills to the South-West in a brown cloud of singular structure, denser in some parts than others, continually changing its points of greatest density, like one of Thompson's diagrams of the ultimate structure of gases, for you could see the component atoms as they swept by. They were swirling round and round upwards-downwards like the eddying snowflakes in a winter's storm, and the whole air rustled with the beat of the locusts' wings. They hailed against the steep iron roofs of the store-houses, slid down it, many falling feet through the air before they recovered the use of their wings—the gutters were soon full of them—the ducks in the yard below were gobbling

and squabbling over the layer now covering the ground, and the baboon chattered as he seized handfuls and pulled them to pieces.

Everybody took them with excitement, save the jack crows, who on their arrival were sitting sleeping on the roof ridge. They were horribly bored and bothered by the affair. Twice they flopped down and tried them. There they were lying about in gutters with a tempting garbagey look, but evidently the jack crows found them absolutely mawkish; so they went back to the roof ridge in a fuming rage, because the locusts battered against them and prevented them from sleeping.

We left Sierra Leone on the —— late in the afternoon, and ran out again into the same misty wet weather. The next morning the balance of our passengers were neither up early, nor lively when they were up; but to my surprise, after what I had heard, no one had the much-prognosticated attack of fever. All day long we steamed onwards, passing the Banana Isles and Sherboro Island and the sound usually called Sherboro River.[1] We, being a South-West Coast boat, did not call at the trading settlements here, but kept on past Cape St. Ann for the Kru coast.

All day long the rain came down as if thousands of energetic—well, let us say—angels were hurriedly baling the waters above the firmament out into the ocean. Everything on board was reeking wet.

You could sweep the moisture off the cabin panelling with your hand, and our clothes were clammy and musty, and the towels too damp on their own account to dry you. Why none of us started specialising branchiæ I do not know, but feel that would have been the proper sort of breathing apparatus for such an atmosphere.

The passengers were all at the tail end of their spirits, for Sierra Leone is the definite beginning of the Coast to the outgoer. You are down there when you leave it outward bound; it is indeed the complement of Canary. Those going up out of West Africa begin to get excited

[1] This word is probably a corruption of the old name for this district, Cerberos.

at Sierra Leone; those going down into West Africa, particularly when it is the wet season, begin to get depressed. It did not, however, operate in this manner on me. I had survived Sierra Leone, I had enjoyed it; why, therefore, not survive other places, and enjoy them? Moreover, my scientific training, combined with close study of the proper method of carrying on the local conversation, had by now enabled me to understand its true spirit, never contradict, and, if you can, help it onward. When going on deck about 6 o'clock that evening, I was alarmed to see our gallant captain in red velvet slippers. A few minutes later the chief officer burst on my affrighted gaze in red velvet slippers too. On my way hurriedly to the saloon I encountered the third officer similarly shod. When I recovered from these successive shocks, I carried out my mission of alarming the rest of the passengers, who were in the saloon enjoying themselves peacefully, and reported what I had seen. The old Coasters, even including the silent ones, agreed with me that we were as good as lost so far as this world went; and the deaf gentleman went hurriedly on deck, we think, "to take the sun"—it was a way he had at any time of day, because "he had been studying about how to fix points for the Government—and wished to keep himself in practice."

My fellow new-comers were perplexed; and one of them, a man who always made a point of resisting education, and who thought nothing of calling some of our instructor's best information "Tommy Rot!" said, "I don't see what can happen; we're right out at sea, and it's as calm as a millpond."

"Don't you, my young friend? don't you?" sadly said an old Coaster. "Well, I'll just tell you there's precious little that can't happen, for we're among the shoals of St. Ann."

The new-comers went on deck "just to look round;" and as there was nothing to be seen but a superb specimen of damp darkness, they returned to the saloon, one of them bearing an old chart sheet which he had borrowed from the authorities. Now that chart was not

reassuring; the thing looked like an exhibition pattern of a prize shot gun, with the quantity of rocks marked down on it.

"Look here," said an anxious inquirer; "why are some of these rocks named after the Company's ships?"

"Think," said the calm old Coaster.

"Oh, I say! hang it all, you don't mean to say they've been wrecked here? Anyhow, if they have, they got off all right. How is it the 'Yoruba Rock' and the 'Gambia Rock?' The 'Yoruba' and the 'Gambia' are running now."

"Those," explains the old Coaster kindly, "were the old 'Yoruba' and 'Gambia.' The 'Bonny' that runs now isn't the old 'Bonny.' It's the way with most of them, isn't it?" he says, turning to a fellow old Coaster. "Naturally," says his friend. "But this is the old original—you know, and it's just about time she wrote up her name on one of these tombstones." "You don't save ships," he continues, for the instruction of the new-comers, attentive enough now; "that go on the Kru coast, and if you get ashore you don't save the things you stand up in—the natives strip you."

"Cannibals!" I suggest.

"Oh, of course they are cannibals; they are all cannibals, are natives down here when they get the chance. But, that does not matter; you see what I object to is being brought on board the next steamer that happens to call crowded with all sorts of people you know, and with a lady missionary or so among them, just with nothing on one but a flyaway native cloth. You remember D——?" "Well," says his friend. Strengthened by this support, he takes his turn at instructing the young critic, saying soothingly, "There, don't you worry; have a good dinner." (It was just being laid.) "For if you do get ashore the food is something beastly. But, after all, what with the sharks and the surf and the cannibals, you know the chances are a thousand to one that the worst will come to the worst and you will live to miss your trousers."

After dinner we new-comers went on deck to keep

an eye on Providence, and I was called on to explain how the alarm had been given me by the footgear of the officers. I said, like all great discoveries, "it was founded on observation made in a scientific spirit." I had noticed that whenever a particularly difficult bit of navigation had to be done on our boat, red velvet slippers were always worn, as for instance, when running through the heavy weather we had met south of the Bay, on going in at Puerto de la Luz, and on rounding the Almadia reefs, and on entering Freetown harbour in fog. But never before had I seen more than one officer wearing them at a time, while to-night they were blazing like danger signals at the shore ends of all three.

My opinion as to the importance of these articles to navigation became further strengthened by subsequent observations in the Bights of Biafra and Benin. We picked up rivers in them, always wore them when crossing bars, and did these things on the whole successfully. But once I was on a vessel that was rash enough to go into a difficult river—Rio Del Rey—without their aid. That vessel got stuck fast on a bank, and, as likely as not, would be sticking there now with her crew and passengers mere mosquito-eaten skeletons, had not our first officer rushed to his cabin, put on red velvet slippers and gone out in a boat, energetically sounding around with a hand lead. Whereupon we got off, for clearly it was not by his sounding; it never amounted to more than two fathoms, while we required a good three-and a half. Yet that first officer, a truthful man always, said "Nobody did a stroke of work on board that vessel bar himself"; so I must leave the reader to escape if he can from believing it was the red velvet slippers that saved us, merely remarking that these invaluable nautical instruments were to be purchased at Hamburg, and were possibly only met with on boats that run to Hamburg and used by veterans of that fleet.

If you will look on the map, not mine, but one visible to the naked eye, you will see that the Coast from Sierra Leone to Cape Palmas is the lower bend of the hump of

Africa and the turning point into the Bights of Benin, Biafra and Panavia.

Its appearance gives the voyager his first sample of those stupendous sweeps of monotonous landscapes so characteristic of Africa. From Sherboro River to Cape Mount, viewed from the sea, every mile looks as like the next as peas in a pod, and should a cruel fate condemn you to live ashore here in a factory you get so used to the eternal sameness that you automatically believe that nothing else but this sort of world, past, present, or future, can ever have existed: and that cities and mountains are but the memories of dreams. A more horrible life than a life in such a region for a man who never takes to it, it is impossible to conceive; for a man who does take to it, it is a kind of dream life. I am judging from the few men I have met who have been stationed here in the few isolated little factories that are established. Some of them look like haunted men, who, when they are among white men again, cling to their society: others are lazy, dreamy men, rather bored by it.

The kind of country that produces this effect must be exceedingly simple in make: it is not the mere isolation from fellow white men that does it—for example, the handful of men who are on the Ogowé do not get like this, though many of them are equally lone men, yet they are bright and lively enough. Anyhow, exceedingly simple in make as is this region of Africa from Sherboro to Cape Mount, it consists of four different things in four long lines—lines that go away into eternity for as far as eye can see. There is the band of yellow sand on which your little factory is built. This band is walled to landwards by a wall of dark forest, mounted against the sky to seaward by a wall of white surf; beyond that there is the horizon-bounded ocean. Neither the forest-wall nor surf-wall changes enough to give any lively variety; they just run up and down a gamut of the same set of variations. In the light of brightest noon the forest-wall stands dark against the dull blue sky, in the depth of the darkest night you can see it stand darker still, against the stars; on moonlight

nights and on tornado nights, when you see the forest-wall by the lightning light, it looks as if it had been done over with a coat of tar. The surf-wall is equally consistent, it may be bad, or good as surf, but it's generally the former, which merely means it is a higher, broader wall, and more noisy, but it's the same sort of wall, making the same sort of noise all the time. It is always white; in the sunlight, snowy white suffused with a white mist wherein are little broken, quivering bits of rainbows. In the moonlight, it gleams with a whiteness there is in nothing else on earth. If you can imagine a non-transparent diamond wall, I think you will get some near idea to it, and even on the darkest of dark nights you can still see the surf-wall clearly enough, for it shows like the ghost of its daylight self, seeming to have in it a light of its own, and you love or hate it. Night and day and season changes pass over these things, like reflections in a mirror, without altering the mirror frame; but nothing comes that ever stills for one-half second the thunder of the surf-wall or makes it darker, or makes the forest-wall brighter than the rest of your world. Mind you, it is intensely beautiful, intensely soothing, intensely interesting, if you can read it and you like it, but life for a man who cannot and does not is a living death.

But if you are seafaring there is no chance for a brooding melancholy to seize on you hereabouts, for you soon run along this bit of coast and see the sudden, beautiful headland of Cape Mount, which springs aloft in several rounded hills a thousand and odd feet above the sea and looking like an island. After passing it, the land rapidly sinks again to the old level, for a stretch of another 46 miles or so when Cape Mesurado,[1] rising about 200 feet, seems from seaward to be another island.

[1] The derivation of this name given by Barbot is from *misericordia*. "As some pretend on occasion of a Portuguese ship cast away near the little river Druro, the men of that ship were assaulted by the negroes, which made the Portuguese cry for quarter, using the word *misericordia*, from which by corruption mesurado."

The capital of the Liberian Republic, Monrovia, is situated on the southern side of the river Mesurado, and right under the high land of the Cape, but it is not visible from the roadstead, and then again comes the low coast, unrolling its ribbon of sandy beach walled as before with forest-wall and surf, but with the difference that between the sand beach and the forest are long stretches of lagooned waters. Evil looking, mud-fringed things they were, when I once saw them at the end of a hard, dry season, but when the wet season's rains come they are transformed into beautiful lakes; communicating with each other and overflowing by shallow channels which they cut here and there through the sand-beach ramparts into the sea.

The identification of places from aboard ship along such a coast as this is very difficult. Even good sized rivers doubling on themselves sneak out between sand banks, and make no obvious break in surf or forest wall. The old sailing direction that gave as a landmark the "Tree with two crows on it" is as helpful as any one could get of many places here, and when either the smoke season or the wet season is on of course you cannot get as good as that. But don't imagine that unless the navigator wants to call on business, he can "just put up his heels and blissfully think o' nowt," for this bit of the West Coast of Africa is one of the most trying in the world to work. Monotonous as it is ashore, it is exciting enough out to sea in the way of the rocks and shoals, and an added danger exists at the beginning and end of the wet, and the beginning of the dry season, in the shape of tornadoes[1] These are sudden storms coming up usually with terrific violence; customarily from the S.E. and E., but sometimes towards the end of the season straight from S. More slave ships than enough have been lost along this bit of coast in their time, let alone decent Bristol Guineamen into the bargain, owing to "a delusion that occasionally seized inexperienced

[1] Tornado is possibly a corruption from the Portuguese *trovado*, a thunderstorm; or from *tornado*, signifying returned: but most likely it comes from the Spanish *tornado*, signifying thunder.

commanders that it was well to heave-to for a tornado, whereas a sailing ship's best chance lay in her heels." It was a good chance too, for owing to the short duration of this breed of hurricane and their terrific rain, there accompanies them no heavy sea, the tornado-rain ironing the ocean down; so if, according to one of my eighteenth century friends, you see that well-known tornado-cloud arch coming, and you are on a Guineaman, for your sins, "a dray of a vessel with an Epping Forest of sea growth on her keel, and two-thirds of the crew down with fever or dead of it, as likely they will be after a spell on this coast," the sooner you get her ready to run the better, and with as little on her as you can do with. If, however, there be a white cloud inside the cloud-arch you must strip her quick and clean, for that tornado is going to be the worst tornado you were ever in.

Nevertheless, tornadoes are nothing to the rocks round here. At the worst, there are but two tornadoes a day, always at tide turn, only at certain seasons of the year, and you can always see them coming; but it is not that way with the rocks. There is at least one to each quarter hour in the entire twenty-four. They are there all the year round, and more than one time in forty you can't see them coming. In case you think I am overstating the case, I beg to lay before you the statement concerning rocks given me by an old captain, who was used to these seas and never lost a ship. I had said something flippant about rocks, and he said, "I'll write them down for you, missy." This is just his statement for the chief rocks between Junk River and Baffu; not a day's steamer run. "Two and three quarters miles and six cables N.W. by W. from Junk River there is 'Hooper's Patch,' irregular in shape, about a mile long and carrying in some places only 2½ fathoms of water. There is another bad patch about a mile and a-half from Hooper's, so if you have to go dodging your way into Marshall, a Liberian settlement, great caution and good luck is useful. In Waterhouse Bay there's a cluster of pinnacle rocks all under water, with a will-o'-the wisp

kind of buoy, that may be there or not to advertise them. One rock at Tobokanni has the civility to show its head above water, and a chum of his, that lies about a mile W. by S. from Tobokanni Point, has the seas constantly breaking on it. The coast there is practically reefed for the next eight miles, with a boat channel near the shore. But there is a gap in this reef at Young Sesters, through which, if you handle her neatly, you can run a ship in. In some places this reef of rock is three-quarters of a mile out to sea. Trade Town is the next place where you may now call for cargo. Its particular rock lies a mile out and shows well with the sea breaking on it. After Trade Town the rocks are more scattered, and the bit of coast by Kurrau River rises in cliffs 40 to 60 feet high. The sand at their base is strewn with fallen blocks on which the surf breaks with great force, sending the spray up in columns; and until you come to Sestos River the rocks are innumerable, but not far out to sea, so you can keep outside them unless you want to run in to the little factory at Tembo. Just beyond Sestos River, three-quarters of a mile S.S.W. of Fen River, there are those Fen rocks on which the sea breaks, but between these and the Manna rocks, which are a little more than a mile from shore N.W. by N. from Sestos River, there are any quantity of rocks marked and not marked on the chart. These Manna rocks are a jolly bad lot, black, and only a few breaking, and there is a shoal bank to the S.E. of these for half a mile, then for the next four miles, there are not more than 70 hull openers to the acre. Most of them are not down on the chart, so there's plenty of opportunity now about for you to do a little African discovery until you come to Sestos reef, off a point of the same name, projecting half a mile to westwards with a lot of foul ground round it. Spence rock which breaks, is W. two-thirds S., distant 1¼ miles from Sestos Point; within 5 miles of it is the rock which *The Corisco* discovered in 1885. It is not down on the chart yet, all these set of rocks round Sestos are sharp too, so the lead gives you no warning, and you are safer right away from them.

Then there's a very nasty one called Diabolitos. I expect those old Portuguese found it out, it's got a lot of little ones which extend 2 miles and more to seaward. There is another devil rock off Bruni, called by the natives Ba Ya. It stands 60 feet above sea-level, and has a towering crown of trees on it. It is a bad one is this, for in thick weather, as it is a mile off shore and isolated, it is easily mistaken, and so acts as a sort of decoy for the lot of sunken devil rocks which are round it. Further along towards Baffu there are four more rocks a mile out, and foul ground all the way."

I just give you this bit of information as an example, because I happen to have this rough rock list of it; but a little to the east the rocks and dangers of the Kru Coast are quite as bad, both in quantity and quality, indeed, more so, for there is more need for vessels to call. I often think of this bit of coast when I see people unacquainted with the little local peculiarities of dear West Africa looking at a map thereof and wondering why such and such a Bay is not utilised as a harbour, or such and such a river not navigated, or this, that and the other bit of Coast so little known of and traded with. Such undeveloped regions have generally excellent local reasons, reasons that cast no blame on white man's enterprise or black man's savagery. They are rock-reefed coast or barred rivers, and therefore not worth the expense to the trader of working them, and you must always remember that unless the trader opens up bits of West Africa no one else will. It may seem strange to the landsman that the navigator should hug such a coast as the shoals (the *Baixos* as the old Portuguese have it) of St. Ann—but they do. If you ask a modern steamboat captain he will usually tell you it is to save time, a statement that the majority of the passengers on a West Coast boat will receive with open derision and contempt, holding him to be a spendthrift thereof; but I myself fancy that hugging this coast is a vestigial idea. In the old sailing-ship days, if you ran out to sea far from these shoals you lost your wind, and maybe it would take you five mortal weeks to go from

Sierra Leone to Cape Mount or *Wash Congo*, as the natives called it in the 17th century.

Off the Kru Coast, both West Coast and South-West Coast steamers and men-o'-war on this station, call to ship or unship Krumen. The character of the rocks, of which I have spoken—their being submerged for the most part, and pinnacles—increases the danger considerably, for a ship may tear a wound in herself that will make short work of her, yet unless she remains impaled on the rock, making, as it were, a buoy of herself, that rock might not be found again for years.

This sort of thing has happened many times, and the surveying vessels, who have been instructed to localise the danger and get it down on the chart, have failed to do so in spite of their most elaborate efforts; whereby the more uncharitable of the surveying officers are led in their wrath to hold that the mercantile marine officers who reported that rock and gave its bearings did so under the influence of drink, while the more charitable and scientifically inclined have suggested that elevation and subsidence are energetically and continually at work along the Bight of Benin, hoisting up shoals to within a few feet of the surface in some places, and withdrawing them in others to a greater depth.

The people ashore here are commonly spoken of as Liberians and Kruboys. The Liberians are colonists in the country, having acquired settlements on this coast by purchase from the chiefs of the native tribes. The idea of restoring the Africans carried off by the slave trade to Africa occurred to America before it did to England, for it was warmly advocated by the Rev. Samuel Hoskins, of Newport, Rhode Island, in 1770, but it was 1816 before America commenced to act on it, and the first emigrants embarked from New York for Liberia in 1820. On the other hand, though England did not get the idea until 1787, she took action at once, buying from King Tom, through the St. George's Bay Company, the land at Sierra Leone between the Rochelle and Kitu River. This was done on the recommendation of Mr. Smeatham. The same year

was shipped off to this new colony the first consignment of 460 free negro servants and 60 whites; out of those 400 arrived and survived their first fortnight, and set themselves to build a town called Granville, after Mr. Granville Sharpe, whose exertions had resulted in Lord Mansfield's epoch-making decision in the case of Somerset *v.* Mr. J. G. Stewart, his master, *i.e.*, that no slave could be held on English soil.

The Liberians were differently situated from their neighbours at Sierra Leone in many ways; in some of these they have been given a better chance than the Africans sent to Sierra Leone—in other ways not so good a chance. Neither of the colonies has been completely successful.

I hold the opinion that if those American and English philanthropists could not have managed the affair better than they did, they had better have confined their attention to talking, a thing they were naturally great on, and left the so-called restoration of the African to his native soil alone. For they made a direful mess of the affair from a practical standpoint, and thereby inflicted an enormous amount of suffering and a terrible mortality on the Africans they shipped from England, Canada, and America: the tradition whereof still clings to the colonies of Liberia and Sierra Leone, and gravely hinders their development by the emigration of educated, or at any rate civilised Africans now living in the West Indies and the Southern States of America.

I am aware that there are many who advocate the return to Africa of the Africans who were exported from the West Coast during the slavery days. But I cannot regard this as a good or even necessary policy, for two reasons. One is that those Africans were not wanted in West Africa. The local supply of African is sufficient to develop the country in every way. There are in West Africa now, Africans thoroughly well educated, as far as European education goes, and who are quite conversant with the nature of their own country and with the language of their fellow countrymen. There are also any quantity of Africans there who,

though not well educated, are yet past-masters in the particular culture which West Africa has produced on its inhabitants.

The second reason is that the descendants of the exported Africans have seemingly lost their power of resistance to the malarial West Coast climate. This is a most interesting subject, which some scientific gentleman ought to attend to, for there is a sufficient quantity of evidence ready for his investigation. The mortality mong the Africans sent to Sierra Leone and Liberia has been excessive, and so also has been that amongst the West Indians who went to Congo Belge, while the original intention of the United Presbyterian Mission to Calabar had to be abandoned from the same cause. In fact it looks as if the second and third generation of deported Africans had no greater power of resistance to West Africa than the pure white races ; and such being the case it seems to me a pity they should go there. They would do better to bring their energies to bear on developing the tropical regions of America and leave the undisturbed stock of Africa to develop its own.

However, we will not go into that now. I beg to refer you to Bishop Ingram's *Sierra Leone after a Hundred Years*, for the history of England's philanthropic efforts. I may, some day, perhaps, in the remote future, write myself a book on America's effort, but I cannot write it now, because I have in my possession only printed matter—a wilderness of opinion and a mass of abuse on Liberia as it is. No sane student of West Africa would proceed to form an opinion on any part of it with such stuff and without a careful personal study of the thing as it is.

The natives of this part of the West coast, the aboriginal ones, as Mrs. Gault would call them, are a different matter. You can go and live in West Africa without seeing a crocodile or a hippopotamus or a mountain, but no white man can go there without seeing and experiencing a Kruboy, and Kruboys are one of the main tribes here. Kruboys are, indeed, the backbone of white effort in West Africa, and I think I may say there

is but one man of all of us who have visited West Africa who has not paid a tribute to the Kruboys' sterling qualities. Alas! that one was one of England's greatest men. Why he painted that untrue picture of them I do not know. I know that on this account the magnificent work he did is discredited by all West Coasters. "If he said that of Kruboys," say the old Coasters, "how can he have known or understood anything?" It is a painful subject, and my opinion on Kruboys is entirely with the old Coasters, who know them with an experience of years, not with the experience of any man, however eminent, who only had the chance of seeing them for a few weeks, and whose information was so clearly drawn from vitiated sources. All I can say in defence of my great fellow countryman is that he came to West Africa from the very worst school a man can for understanding the Kruboy, or any true Negro, namely, from the Bantu African tribes, and that he only fell into the error many other great countrymen of mine have since fallen into, whereby there is war and misunderstanding and disaffection between our Government and the true Negro to-day, and nothing, as far as one can see, but a grievous waste of life and gold ahead.

The Kruboy is indeed a sore question to all old Coasters. They have devoted themselves to us English, and they have suffered, laboured, fought, been massacred, and so on with us for generation after generation. Many a time Krumen have come to me when we have been together in foreign possessions and said, "Help us, we are Englishmen." They have never asked in vain of me or any Englishman in West Africa, but recognition of their services by our Government at home is—well, about as much recognition as most men get from it who do good work in West Africa. For such men are a mere handful whom a so-called Imperialism can neglect with impunity, and even if it has for the moment to excuse itself for so doing, it need only call us "traders." I say "us," because I am vain of having been, since my return, classed among the Liverpool traders by a distinguished officer.

This part of Western Africa from Sierra Leone to

Cape Palmas was known to the geographers amongst the classics as *Leuce Æthiopia*: to their successors as the Grain or Pepper or Meleguetta Coast. I will discourse later of the inhabitants, the Kru, from an ethnological standpoint, because they are too interesting and important to be got in here. The true limits of the Grain coast are from the River Sestros to Growy, two leagues east of Cape Palmas according to Barbot, and its name came from the fact that it was thereabouts that the Portuguese, on their early expeditions in the 15th century, first came across grains of paradise, a circumstance that much excited those navigators at the time and encouraged them to pursue their expeditions to this region, for grains of paradise were in those days much valued and had been long known in European markets.

These euphoniously-named spices are the seeds of divers amomums or in lay language, cardamum—*Amomum Meleguetta* (Roscoe) or as Pereira has it, *Amomum granum Paradisi*. Their more decorative appellation "grains of Paradise" is of Italian origin, the Italians having known and valued this spice, bought it, and sold it to the rest of Europe at awful prices long before the Portuguese, under Henry the Navigator, visited the West African Coast. The Italians had bought the spice from the tawny Moors, who brought it, with other products of West Africa, across the Desert to the Mediterranean port Monte Barca by Tripoli.

The reason why this African cardamum received either the name of grains of Paradise or of Meleguetta pepper is, like most African things, wrapt in mystery to a certain extent. Some authorities hold they got the first name on their own merits. Others that the Italian merchants gave it them to improve prices. Others that the Italians gave it them honestly enough on account of their being nice, and no one knowing where on earth exactly they came from, said, therefore, why not say Paradise? It is certain, however, that before the Portuguese went down into the unknown seas and found the Pepper coast that the Italians knew those peppers came from the country of Melli, but as they did not know

where that was, beyond that it was somewhere in Africa, this did not take away the sense of romance from the spice.

As for their name Meleguetta, an equal divergence of opinion reigns. I myself think the proper word is meneguetta. The old French name was maneguilia, and the name they are still called by at Cape Palmas in the native tongue is emanequetta. The French claim to have brought peppers and ivory from the River Sestros as early as 1364, and the River Sestros was on the seaboard of the kingdom of Mene, but the termination quetta is most probably a corruption of the Portuguese name for pepper. But, on the other hand, the native name for them among the Sestros people is Waizanzag. And therefore, the whole name may well be European, and just as well called meleguetta as meneguetta, because the kingdom of Mene was a fief of the Empire of Melli when the Portuguese first called at Sestros. The other possible derivation is that which says mele is a corruption of the Italian name for Turkey millet, *melanga*, a thing the grains rather resemble. Another very plausible derivation is that the whole word is Portuguese in origin, but a corruption of *mala gens*, the Portuguese having found the people they first bought them of a bad lot, and so named the pepper in memory thereof. This however is interestingly erroneous, and an early example of the danger of armchairism when dealing with West Africa. For the coast of the *malegens* was not the coast the Portuguese first got the pepper from, but it was that coast just to the east of the Meleguetta, where all they got was killing and general unpleasantness round by the Rio San Andrew, Drewin way, which coast is now included in the Ivory.

The grains themselves are by no means confined to the Grain Coast, but are the fruit of a plant common in all West African districts, particularly so on Cameroon Mountain, where just above the 3,000 feet level on the east and south-east face, you come into a belt of them, and horrid walking ground they make. I have met with them also in great profusion in the Sierra del

Crystal; but there is considerable difference in the kinds. The grain of Paradise of commerce is, like that of the East Indian cardamum, enclosed in a fibrous capsule, and the numerous grains in it are surrounded by a pulp having a most pleasant, astringent, aromatic taste. This is pleasant eating, particularly if you do not manage to chew up with it any of the grains, for they are amazingly hot in the mouth, and cause one to wonder why Paradise instead of Hades was reported as their "country of origin."

The natives are very fond of chewing the capsule and the inner bark of the stem of the plant. They are, for the matter of that, fond of chewing anything, but the practice in this case seems to me more repaying than when carried on with kola or ordinary twigs.

Two kinds of meleguetta pepper come up from Guinea. That from Accra is the larger, plumper, and tougher skinned, and commands the higher price. The capsule, which is about 2 inches long by 1 inch in breadth, is more oval than that of the other kind, and the grains in it are round and bluntly angular, bright brown outside, but when broken open showing a white inside. The other kind, the ordinary Guinea Grain of commerce, comes from Sierra Leone and Liberia. They are devoid of the projecting tuft on the umbellicus. The capsule is like that of the Accra grain. When dry, it is wrinkled, and if soaked does not display the longitudinal frill of the Javan *Amomum maximum*, which it is sometimes used to adulterate. This common capsule is only about 1½ inches long and ⅛ an inch in diameter, but the grain when broken open is also white like the Accra one. There are, however, any quantity on Camaroons of the winged Javan variety, but these have so far not been exported.

The plants that produce the grains are zingiberaceous, cane-like in appearance, only having broader, blunter leaves than the bamboo. The flower is very pretty, in some kinds a violet pink, but in the most common a

violet purple, and they are worn as marks of submission by people in the Oil Rivers suing for peace. These flowers, which grow close to the ground, seeming to belong more to the root of the plant than the stem, or, more properly speaking, looking as if they had nothing to do with the graceful great soft canes round them, but were a crop of lovely crocus-like flowers on their own account, are followed by crimson-skinned pods enclosing the black and brown seeds wrapped in juicy pulp, quite unlike the appearance they present when dried or withered.

There is only a small trade done in Guinea grains now, George III. (Cap. 58) having declared that no brewer or dealer in wine shall be found in possession of grains of Paradise without paying a fine of £200, and that if any druggist shall sell them to a brewer that druggist shall pay a fine of £500 for each such offence.

The reason of this enactment was the idea that the grains were poisonous, and that the brewers in using them to give fire to their liquors were destroying their consumers, His Majesty's lieges. As far as poison goes this idea was wrong, for Meleguetta pepper or grains of Paradise are quite harmless, though hot. Perhaps, however, some consignment may have reached Europe with poisonous seeds in it. I once saw four entirely different sorts of seeds in a single sample. That is the worst of our Ethiopian friends, they adulterate every mortal thing that passes through their hands. I will do them the justice to say they usually do so with the intellectually comprehensible end in view of gaining an equivalent pecuniary advantage by it. Still it is commercially unsound of them; for example, for years they sent up the seeds of the *Kickia Africana* as an adulteration for *Strophantus*, whereas they would have made more by finding out that the *Kickia* was a great rubber-producing tree. They will often take as much trouble to put in foreign matter as to get more legitimate raw material. I really fancy if any one were to open up a trade in Kru Coast rocks, adulteration would be found in the third shipment. It is their way, and legislation is useless. All that is

necessary is that the traders who buy of them should know their business, and not make infants of themselves by regarding the African as one or expecting the government to dry nurse them.

In private life the native uses and values these Guinea grains highly, using them sometimes internally, sometimes externally, pounding them up into a paste with which they beplaster their bodies for various aches and pains. For headache, not the sequelæ of trade gin, but of malaria, the forehead and temples are plastered with a stiff paste made of Guinea grain, hard oil, chalk, or some such suitable medium, and it is a most efficacious treatment for this fearfully common complaint in West Africa. But the careful ethnologist must not mix this medicinal plaster up with the sort of prayerful plaster worn by the West Africans at the time for Ju Ju, and go and mistake a person who is merely attending to his body for one who is attending to his soul.

CHAPTER III

AFRICAN CHARACTERISTICS

Containing some account of the divers noises of Western Afrik, and an account of the country east of Cape Palmas, and other things; to which is added an account of the manner of shipping timber; of the old Bristol trade; and, mercifully for the reader, a leaving off.

WHEN we got our complement of Krumen on board, we proceeded down Coast with the intention of calling off Accra. I will spare you the description of the scenes which accompany the taking on of Kruboys; they have frequently been described, for they always alarm the new-comer—they are the first bit of real Africa he sees if bound for the Gold Coast or beyond. Sierra Leone, charming as it is, has a sort of Christy Minstrel air about it for which he is prepared, but the Kruboy as he comes on board looks quite the Boys' Book of Africa sort of thing; though, needless to remark, as innocent as a lamb, bar a tendency to acquire portable property. Nevertheless, Kruboys coming on board for your first time alarm you; at any rate they did me, and they also introduced me to African noise, which like the insects is another most excellent thing that you should get broken into early.

Woe to the man in Africa who cannot stand perpetual uproar! Few things surprised me more than the rarity of silence and the intensity of it when you did get it. There is only that time which comes between

10.30 A.M. and 4.30 P.M., in which you can look for anything like the usual quiet of an English village. We will give Man the first place in the orchestra, he deserves it. I fancy the main body of the lower classes of Africa think externally instead of internally. You will hear them when they are engaged together on some job—each man issuing the fullest directions and prophecies concerning it, in shouts; no one taking the least notice of his neighbours. If the head man really wants them to do something definite he fetches those within his reach an introductory whack; and even when you are sitting alone in the forest you will hear a man or woman coming down the narrow bush path chattering away with such energy and expression that you can hardly believe your eyes when you learn from him that he has no companion.

Some of this talking is, I fancy, an equivalent to our writing. I know many English people who, if they want to gather a clear conception of an affair, write it down; the African, not having writing, first talks it out. And again more of it is conversation with spirit guardians and familiar spirits, and also with those of their dead relatives and friends, and I have often seen a man, sitting at a bush fire or in a village palaver house, turn round and say, "You remember that, mother?" to the ghost that to him was there.

I remember mentioning this very touching habit of theirs, as it seemed to me, in order to console a sick and irritable friend whose cabin was close to a gangway then in possession of a very lively lot of Sierra Leone Kruboys, and he said, "Oh, I dare say they do, Miss Kingsley; but I'll be hanged if Hell is such a damned way off West Africa that they need shout so loud."

The calm of the hot noontide fades towards evening time, and the noise of things in general revives and increases. Then do the natives call in instrumental aid of diverse and to my ear pleasant kinds. Great is the value of the tom-tom, whether it be of pure native origin or constructed from an old Devos patent paraffin oil tin. Then there is the kitty-katty, so called from its

[*To face page* 54.

For Palm Wine.

strange scratching-vibrating sound, which you hear down South, and on Fernando Po, of the excruciating mouth harp, and so on, all accompanied by the voice.

If it be play night, you become the auditor to an orchestra as strange and varied as that which played before Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego. I know I am no musician, so I own to loving African music, bar that Fernandian harp! Like Benedick, I can say, "Give me a horn for my money when all is done," unless it be a tom-tom. The African horn, usually made of a tooth of ivory, and blown from a hole in the side, is an instrument I unfortunately cannot play on. I have not the lung capacity. It requires of you to breathe in at one breath a whole S.W. gale of wind and then to empty it into the horn, which responds with a preliminary root-too-toot before it goes off into its noble dirge bellow. It is a fine instrument, and should be introduced into European orchestras, for it is full of colour. But I think that even the horn, and certainly all other instruments, savage and civilised, should bow their heads in homage to the tom-tom, for, as a method of getting at the inner soul of humanity where are they compared with that noble instrument? You doubt it. Well, go and hear a military tattoo or any performance on kettledrums up here, and I feel you will reconsider the affair; but even then, remember you have not heard all the African tom-tom can tell you. I don't say it's an instrument suited for serenading your lady-love with, but that is a thing I don't require of an instrument. All else the tom-tom can do, and do well. It can talk as well as the human tongue. It can make you want to dance or fight for no private reason, as nothing else can, and be you black or white it calls up in you all your Neolithic man.

Many African instruments are, however, sweet and gentle, and as mild as sucking doves, notably the xylophonic family. These Marimbas, to use their most common name, are all over Africa, from Senegal to Zambesi. Their form varies with various tribes—the West African varieties almost universally have wooden

keys instead of iron ones like the East African. Personally, I like the West African best; there is something exquisite in the sweet, clear, water-like notes produced from the strips of soft wood of graduated length that make the West African key-board. All these instruments have the sound magnified and enriched by a hollow wooden chamber under their key-board. In Calabar this chamber is one small shallow box, ornamented, as most wooden things are in Calabar, with poker work—but in among the Fan, under the key-board were a set of calabashes, and in the calabashes one hole apiece and that hole covered carefully with the skin of a large spider. While down in Angola you met the xylophone in the imposing form you can see on the opposite page. Of the orchid fibre-stringed harp, I have spoken elsewhere, and there remains but one more truly great instrument that I need mention. I have had a trial at playing every African instrument I have come across, under native teachers, and they have assured me that, with application, I should succeed in becoming a rather decent performer on the harp and xylophone, and had the makings of a genius for the tom-tom but my greatest and most rapid triumph was achieved on this other instrument. I picked up the hang of the thing in about five minutes, and then being vain when I returned to white society I naturally desired to show off my accomplishment, but met with no encouragement whatsoever—indeed my friends said gently, but firmly, that if I did it again they should leave, not the settlement merely, but the continent, and devote their remaining years to sweeping crossings in their native northern towns—they said they would rather do this than hear that instrument played again by any one.

This instrument is made from an old powder keg, with both ends removed; a piece of raw hide is tied tightly round it over what one might call a bung-hole, while a piece of wood with a lump of rubber or fastening is passed through this hole. The performer then wets his hand, inserts it into the instrument, and lightly grasps the stick and works it up and down for all he is worth;

[To face page 56.

Sessuma Players, Congo.

the knob beats the drum skin with a beautiful boom, and the stick gives an exquisite screech as it passes through the hole in the skin, which the performer enhances with an occasional howl or wail of his own, according to his taste or feeling. There are other varieties of this instrument, some with one end of the cylinder covered over and the knob of the stick beating the inside, but in all its forms it is impressive.

Next in point of strength to the human vocal and instrumental performers come frogs. The small green one, whose note is like that of the cricket's magnified, is a part-singer, but the big bull frog, whose tones are all his own, sings in Handel Festival sized choruses. I don't much mind either of these, but the one I hate is a solo frog who seems eternally engaged at night in winding up a Waterbury watch. Many a night have I stocked thick with calamity on that frog's account; many a night have I landed myself in hailing distance of Amen Corner from having gone out of hut, or house, with my mind too full of the intention of flattening him out with a slipper, to think of driver ants, leopards, or snakes. Frog hunting is one of the worst things you can do in West Africa.

Next to frogs come the crickets, with their chorus of "she did, she didn't," and the cicadas, but they knock off earlier than frogs, and when the frogs have done for the night there is quiet for the few hours of cool, until it gets too cool, and the chill that comes before the dawn wakes up the birds, and they wake you with their long, mellow, exquisitely beautiful whistles.

The aforesaid are everyday noises in West Africa, and you soon get used to them or die of them; but there are myriads of others that you hear when in the bush. The grunting sigh of relief of the hippos, the strange groaning, whining bark of the crocodiles, the thin cry of the bats, the cough of the leopards, and that unearthly yell that sometimes comes out of the forest in the depths of dark nights. Yes, my naturalist friends, it's all very well to say it is only a love-lorn, innocent little marmoset-kind of thing that makes it. I know, poor dear, Softly, Softly,

and he wouldn't do it. Anyhow, you just wait until you hear it in a shaky little native hut, or when you are spending the night, having been fool enough to lose yourself, with your back against a tree quite alone, and that yell comes at you with its agony of anguish and appeal out of that dense black world of forest which the moon, be she never so strong, cannot enlighten, and which looks all the darker for the contrast of the glistening silver mist that shows here and there in the clearings, or over lagoon, or river, wavering, twining, rising and falling; so full of strange motion and beauty, yet, somehow, as sinister in its way as the rest of your surroundings, and so deadly silent. I think if you hear that yell cutting through this sort of thing like a knife and sinking despairingly into the surrounding silence, you will agree with me that it seems to favour Duppy, and that, perchance, the strange red patch of ground you passed at the foot of the cotton tree before night came down on you, was where the yell came from, for that place is red and damp, and your native friends have told you it is so because of the blood wiped off a sasa-bonsum and his victims as he goes down through it to his under-world home.

Seen from the sea, the Ivory Coast is a relief to the eye after the dead level of the Grain Coast, but the attention of the mariner to rocks has no practical surcease; and there is that submarine horror for sailing ships, the Bottomless pit. They used to have great tragedies with it in olden times, and you can still, if you like, for that matter; but the French having a station 15 miles to the east of it at Grand Bassam would nowadays prevent your experiencing the action of this phenomenon thoroughly, and getting not only wrecked but killed by the natives ashore, though they are a lively lot still.

Now, although this is not a manual of devotion, I must say a few words on the Bottomless pit. All along the West Coast of Africa there is a great shelving bank, submarine, formed by the deposit of the great mud-laden rivers and the earth-wash of the heavy rains. The slope of what the scientific term the great West African bank is, on the whole, very regular, except opposite Piccaninny

Secret Society Leaders, the Sacred Grove.

[To face p. 31

Jengu Devil Dance of King William's Slaves, Settee Cumma, Nov. 9, 1888.

Bassam, where it is cut right through by a great chasm, presumably the result of volcanic action. This chasm commences about 15 miles from land, and is shaped like a V, with the narrow end shorewards. Nine miles out it is three miles wider and 2,400 feet deep, at three miles out the sides are opposite each other and there is little more than a mile between them, and the depth is 1,536 feet; at one mile from the beach the chasm is only a quarter of a mile wide and the depth 600 feet—close up beside the beach the depth is 120 feet. The floor of this chasm is covered with grey mud, and some five miles out the surveying vessels got fragments of coral rock.

The sides of this submarine valley seem almost vertical cliffs, and herein lies its danger for the sailing ship. The master thereof, in the smoke or fog season (December—February), may not exactly know to a mile or so where he is, and being unable to make out Piccaninny Bassam, which is only a small native village on the sand ridge between the surf and the lagoon, he lets go his anchor on the edge of the cliffs of this Bottomless pit. Then the set of the tide and the onshore breeze cause it to drag a little, and over it goes down into the abyss, and ashore he is bound to go. In old days he and his ship's crew formed a welcome change in the limited dietary of the exultant native. Mr. Barbot, who knew them well, feelingly remarks, "It is from the bloody tempers of these brutes that the Portuguese gave them the name of Malagens, for they eat human flesh," and he cites how "recently they have massacred a great number of Portuguese, Dutch and English, who came for provisions and water, not thinking of any treachery, and not many years since, (that is to say, in 1677) an English ship lost three of its men; a Hollander fourteen; and, in 1678, a Portuguese, nine, of whom nothing was ever heard since."

From Cape Palmas until you are past the mouth of the Taka river (St. Andrew) the coast is low. Then comes the Cape of the Little Strand (Caboda Prazuba), now called, I think, Price's Point. To the east of this

you will see ranges of dwarf red cliffs rising above the beach and gradually increasing in height until they attain their greatest in the face of Mount Bedford, where the cliff is 280 feet high. The Portuguese called these Barreira Vermelhas; the French, Kalazis Rouges; and the Dutch, Roode Kliftin, all meaning Red Cliffs. The sand at their feet is strewn with boulders, and the whole country round here looks fascinating and interesting. I regret never having had an opportunity of seeing whether those cliffs had fossils on them, for they seem to me so like those beloved red cliffs of mine in Kacongo which have. The investigation, however, of such makes of Africa is messy. Those Kacongo cliffs were of a sort of red clay that took on a greasy slipperiness when they were wet, which they frequently were on account of the little springs of water that came through their faces. When pottering about them, after having had my suspicions lulled by twenty or thirty yards of crumbly dryness, I would ever and anon come across a water spring, and down I used to go—and lose nothing by it, going home in the evening time in what the local natives would have regarded as deep mourning for a large family—red clay being their sign thereof. The fossils I found in them were horizontally disposed layers of clam shells, with regular intervals, or bands, of red clay, four or five feet across; between the layers some of the shell layers were 40 or more feet above the present beach level. Identical deposits of shell I also found far inland in Ka Congo, but that has nothing to do with the Ivory Coast.

Inland, near Drewin, on the Ivory Coast, you can see from the sea curious shaped low hills; the definite range of these near Drewin is called the Highland of Drewin; after this place they occur frequently close to the shore, usually isolated but now and again two or three together, like those called by sailors the Sisters. I am much interested in these peculiar-shaped hills that you see on the Ivory and Gold Coast, and again, far away down South, rising out of the Ouronuogou swamp, and have endeavoured to find out if any theories have been

suggested as to their formation, but in vain. They look like great bubbles, and run from 300 to 2,000 feet.

The red cliffs end at Mount Bedford and the estuary of the Fresco River, and after passing this the coast is low until you reach what is now called the district of Lahu, a native sounding name, but really a corruption from its old French name La-Hoe or Hou.

You would not think, when looking at this bit of coast from the sea, that the strip of substantial brown sand-beach is but a sort of viaduct, behind which lies a chain of stagnant lagoons. In the wet season, these stretches of dead water cut off the sand-beach from the forest for as much as 40 miles and more.

Beyond Mount La-Hou on this sand strip there are many native villages—each village a crowded clump of huts, surrounded by a grove of coco palm trees, each tree belonging definitely to some native family or individual, and having its owner's particular mark on it, and each grove of palm trees slanting uniformly at a stiff angle, which gives you no cause to ask which is the prevailing wind here, for they tell you bright and clear, as they lean N.E., that the S.W. wind brought them up to do so.

Groves of coco palms are no favourites of mine. I don't like them. The trees are nice enough to look on, and nice enough to use in the divers ways you can use a coco-nut palm; but the noise of the breeze in their crowns keeps up a perpetual rattle with their hard leaves that sounds like heavy rain day and night, so that you feel you ought to live under an umbrella, and your mind gets worried about it when you are not looking after it with your common sense.

Then the natives are such a nuisance with coco-nuts. For a truly terrific kniff give me even in West Africa a sand-beach with coco-nut palms and natives. You never get coco-nut palms without natives, because they won't grow out of sight of human habitation. I am told also that one coco will not grow alone; it must have another coco as well as human neighbours, so these things, of course, end in a grove. It's like keeping cats with no one to drown the kittens.

Well, the way the smell comes about in this affair is thus. The natives bury the coco-nuts in the sand, so as to get the fibre off them. They have buried nuts in that sand for ages before you arrive, and the nuts have rotted, and crabs have come to see what was going on, a thing crabs will do, and they have settled down here and died in their generations, and rotted too. The sandflies and all manner of creeping things have found that sort of district suit them, and have joined in, while the natives, who are great hands at fishing, have flung all their fish offal there, and then there is usually a lagoon behind all this which contributes its particular aroma, so that between them the smell is a good one, even for West Africa.

The ancient geographers called this coast Ajanginal Æthiope, and the Dutch and French used to reckon it from Growe, where the Melaguetta Coast ends. Just east of Cape Palmas, to the Rio de Sweiro da Costa, where they counted the Gold Coast to begin, the Portuguese divided the coast thus. The Ivory, or, as the Dutchmen called it, the Tand Kust, from Gowe to Rio St. Andrew; the Melaguetta from St. Andrew to the Rio Lagos;[1] and the Quaqua from the Rio Lagos to Rio de Sweiro da Costa, which is just to the east of what is now called Assini.

It is undoubtedly one of the most interesting and now-a-days least known bits of the coast of the Bight of Benin; but, taken altogether, with my small knowledge of it, I do not feel justified in recommending the Ivory Coast as either a sphere for emigration or a pleasure resort. Nevertheless, it is a very rich district naturally, and one of the most amusing features of West African trade you can see on a steamboat is to watch the shipping of timber therefrom.

This region of the Bight of Benin is one of enormous timber wealth, and the development of this of late years has been great, adding the name of Timber Ports to the many other names this particular bit of West Africa bears, the Timber Ports being the main ports of the

[1] No connection with the Colony of Lagos.

French Ivory Coast, and the English port of Axim on the Gold Coast.

The best way to watch the working of this industry is to stay on board the steamer; if by chance you go on shore when this shipping of mahogany is going on you may be expected to help, or get out of the way, which is hot work, or difficult. The last time I was in Africa we on the——shipped 170 enormous baulks of timber. These logs run on an average 20 to 30 feet long and 3 to 4 feet in diameter. They are towed from the beach to the vessel behind the surf boats, seven and eight at a time, tied together by a rope running through rings called dogs, which are driven into the end of each log, and when alongside, the rope from the donkey engine crane is dropped overboard, and passed round the log by the negroes swimming about in the water regardless of sharks and as agile as fish. Then, with much uproar and advice the huge logs are slowly heaved on board, and either deposited on the deck, or forthwith swung over the hatch and lowered down. It is almost needless to remark that, with the usual foresight of Man, the hatch is of a size unsuited to the log, and therefore as it hangs suspended, a chorus of counsel surges up from below and from all sides.

The officer in command of this particular hatch presently shouts "Lower away," waving his hand gracefully from the wrist as though he were practising for piano playing, but really to guide Shoo Fly, who is driving the donkey engine. The tremendous log hovers over the hatch, and then gradually, "softly, softly," as Shoo Fly would say, disappears into the bowels of the ship, until a heterogeneous yell in English and Kru warns the trained intelligence that it is low enough, or more probably too low. "Heave a link!" shouts the officer, and Shoo Fly and the donkey engine heaveth. Then the official hand waves, and the crane swings round with a whiddle, whiddle, and there is a moment's pause, the rope strains, and groans, and waits, and as soon as the most important and valuable people on board, such as the Captain, the Doctor and myself, are within its reach to give advice, and look down the hatch to see what is

going on, that rope likes to break, and comes clawing at us a mass of bent and broken wire, and as we scatter, the great log goes with a crash into the hold. Fortunately, the particular log I remember as indulging in this catastrophe did not go through the ship's bottom, as I confidently expected it had at the time, nor was any one killed, such a batch of miraculous escapes occurring for the benefit of the officer and men below as can only be reasonably accounted for by their having expected this sort of thing to happen.

Quaint are the ways of mariners at times. That time they took on quantities of great logs at the main gangway, well knowing that they would have to go down the hatch aft, and that this would entail hauling them along the narrow alley ways. This process was effected by rigging the steam winches aft, then two sharp hooks connected together by a chain at the end of the wire hawser were fixed into the head of the log, and the word passed "Haul away," water being thrown on the deck to make the logs slip easier over it, and billets of wood put underneath the log with the same intention, and the added hope of saving the deck from being torn by the rough-hewn, hard monster.

Now there are two superstitions rife regarding this affair. The first is, that if you hitch the hooks lightly into each side of the log's head and then haul hard, the weight of the log will cause the hooks to get firmly and safely embedded in it. The second is, that the said weight will infallibly keep the billets under it in due position.

Nothing short of getting himself completely and permanently killed shakes the mariner's faith in these notions. What often happens is this. When the strain is at its highest the hooks slip out of the wood, and try and scalp any one that's handy, and now and again they succeed. There was a man helping that day at Axim whom the Doctor said had only last voyage fallen a victim to the hooks; they slipped out of the head of the log and played round his own, laying it open to the bone at the back, cutting him over the ears and across the forehead,

and if that man had not had a phenomenally thick skull he must have died. But no, there he was on this voyage as busy as ever with the timber, close to those hooks, and evidently with his superstitious trust in the invariable embedding of hooks in timber unabated one fraction.

Sometimes the performance is varied by the hauling rope itself parting and going up the alley-way like a boa constrictor in a fit, whisking up black passengers and boxes full of screaming parrots in its path from places they had placed themselves, or been placed in, well out of its legitimate line of march. But the day it succeeds in clawing hold of and upsetting the cook's grease-tub, which lives in the alley-way, that is the day of horror for the first officer and the inauguration of a period of ardent holystoning for his minions.

Should, however, the broken rope fail to find, as the fox-hunters would say, in the alley-way, it flings itself in a passionate embrace round the person of the donkey engine aft, and gives severe trouble there. The mariners, with an admirable faith and patience, untwine it, talking seriously to it meanwhile, and then fix it up again, may be with more care, and the shout, "Heave away!" goes forth again; the rope groans and creaks, the hooks go in well on either side of the log, and off it moves once more with a graceful, dignified glide towards its destination. The Bo'sun and Chips with their eyes on the man at the winch, and let us hope their thoughts employed in the penitential contemplation of their past sins, so as to be ready for the consequences likely to arise for them if the rope parts again, do not observe the little Whitehindunderbillet, as a German would call it, which is getting nearer and nearer the end of the log, which has stuck to the deck. In a few moments the log is off it, and down on Chips' toes, who returns thanks with great spontaneity, in language more powerful than select. The Bo'sun yells, "Avast heaving, there!" and several other things, while his assistant Kruboys, chattering like a rookery when an old lady's pet parrot has just joined it, get crowbars and raise up the timber, and the Carpenter is a free man again, and the little

white billet reinstated. "Haul away!" roars the Bo'sun, "Abadeo Na nu de um oro de Kri Kri," join in the hoarse-voiced Kruboys, "Ji na oi," answers the excited Shoo Fly, and off goes that log again. The particular log whose goings on I am chronicling slewed round at this juncture with the force of a Roman battering ram, drove in the panel of my particular cabin, causing all sorts of bottles and things inside to cast themselves on the floor and smash, whereby I, going in after dark, got cut. But no matter, that log, one of the classic sized logs, was in the end safely got up the alley-way and duly stowed among its companions. For let West Africa send what it may, be it never so large or so difficult, be he never so ill-provided with tackle to deal with it, the West Coast mariner will have that thing on board, and ship it—all honour to his determination and ability.

The varieties of timber chiefly exported from the West African timber ports are *Oldfieldia Africana*, of splendid size and texture, commonly called mahogany, but really teak, Bar and Camwood and Ebony. Bar and Cam are dye-woods, and, before the Anilines came in these woods were in great request; invaluable they were for giving the dull rich red to bandana handkerchiefs and the warm brown tints to tweed stuffs. Camwood was once popular with cabinet makers and wood-turners here, but of late years it has only come into this market in roots or twisty bits—all the better these for dyeing, but not for working up; and so it has fallen out of demand among cabinet makers, in spite of its beautiful grain and fine colour, a pinky yellow when fresh cut, deepening rapidly on exposure to the air into a rich, dark red brown. Amongst old Spanish furniture you will find things made from Camwood that are a joy to the eye. There has been some confusion as to whether Bar and Camwood are identical—merely a matter of age in the same tree or no—but I have seen the natives cutting both these timbers, and they are quite different trees in the look of them, as any one would expect from seeing a billet of Bar and one of Cam; the former is a light porous wood and orange colour when fresh cut, while

500 billets of Bar and only 150 to 200 of Cam go to the ton.

There are many signs of increasing enterprise in the West African timber trade, but so far this form of wealth has barely been touched, so vast are the West African forests and so varied the trees therein. At present it, like most West African industries, is fearfully handicapped by the deadly climate, the inferiority and expensiveness of labour, and the difficulties of transport.

At present it is useless to fell a tree, be it ever so fine, if it is growing at any distance from a river down which you can float it to the sea beach, for it would be impossible to drag it far through the liane-tangled West African forest.

Indeed, it is no end of a job to drag a decent-sized log even two hundred yards or so to a river. The way it is done is this. When felling the tree you arrange that its head shall fall away from the river, then trim off the rough stuff and hew the heavy end to a rough point, so that when the boys are pully-hauling down the slope —you must have a slope—to the bank, it may not only be able to pierce the opposing undergrowth spearwise more easily than if its end were flat or jagged, but also by the fact of its own weight it may help their exertions.

I have seen one or two grand scenes on the Ogowé with trees felled on steep mountain sides, wherein you had only got to arrange these circumstances, start your log on its downward course to the river, get out of the fair way of it, and leave the rest to gravity, which carried things through in grand style, with a crashing rush and a glorious splash into the river. You had, of course, to take care you had a clear bank and not one fringed with dead trees, into which your mighty spear would embed itself, and also to have a canoe load of energetic people to get hold of the log and keep it out of the current of that lively Ogowé river, or it would go off to Kama Country express. But this work on timber was far easier than that on the Gold or Ivory Coasts, whence most timber comes to Europe, and

where the make of the country does not give you so fully the assistance of steep gradients.

After what I have told you about the behaviour of these great baulks on board ship you will not imagine that the log behaves well during its journey on land. Indeed, my belief in the immorality of inanimate nature has been much strengthened by observing the conduct of African timber. Nor am I alone in judging it harshly, for an American missionary once said to me, "Ah! it will be a grand day for Africa when we have driven out all the heathen devils; they are everywhere, not only in graven images, but just universally scattered around." The remark was made on the occasion of a floor that had been laid down by a mission carpenter coming up on its own account, as native timber floors laid down by native carpenters customarily come, though the native carpenter lays Norway boards well enough.

When, after much toil and tribulation and uproar, the log has been got down to the river and floated, iron rings are driven into it, and it is branded with its owner's mark. Then the owner does not worry himself much about it for a month or so, but lets it float its way down and soak, and generally lazy about until he gets together sufficient of its kind to make a shipment.

One of the many strange and curious things they told me of on the West Coast was that old idea that hydrophobia is introduced into Europe by means of these logs. There is, they say, on the West Coast of Africa a peculiarly venomous scorpion that makes its home on the logs while they are floating in the river, three-parts submerged on account of weight, and the other part most delightfully damp and cool to the scorpion's mind. When the logs get shipped frequently the scorpion gets shipped too, and subsequently comes out in the hold and bites the resident rats. So far I accept this statement fully, for I have seen more than enough rats and scorpions in the hold, and the West Coast scorpions are particularly venomous; but feeling that in these days it is the duty of every one to keep their belief for religious purposes, I cannot go on and in a whole souled way

believe that the dogs of Liverpool, Havre, Hamburg, and Marseilles worry the said rats when they arrive in dock, and, getting bitten by them, breed rabies.

Nevertheless, I do not interrupt and say, "Stuff," because if you do this to the old Coaster he only offers to fight you, or see you shrivelled, or bet you half-a-crown, or in some other time-honoured way demonstrate the truth of his assertion, and he will, moreover, go on and say there is more hydrophobia in the aforesaid towns than elsewhere, and as the chances are you have not got hydrophobia statistics with you, you are lost. Besides, it's very unkind and unnecessary to make a West Coaster go and say or do things which will only make things harder for him in the time "to come," and anyhow if you are of a cautious, nervous disposition you had better search your bunk for scorpions, before turning in, when you are on a vessel that has got timber on board, and the chances are that your labours will be rewarded by discovering specimens of this interesting animal.

Scorpions and centipedes are inferior in worrying power to driver ants, but they are a feature in Coast life, particularly in places—Cameroons, for example. If you see a man who seems to you to have a morbid caution in the method of dealing with his hat or folded dinner napkin, judge him not harshly, for the chances are he is from Cameroon, where there are scorpions—scorpions of great magnitude and tough constitutions, as was demonstrated by a little affair up here that occurred in a family I know.

The inhabitants of the French Ivory Coast are an exceedingly industrious and enterprising set of people in commercial matters, and the export and import trade is computed by a recent French authority at ten million francs per annum. No official computation, however, of the trade of a Coast district is correct, for reasons I will not enter into now.

The native coinage equivalent here is the manilla—a bracelet in a state of sinking into a mere conventional token. These manillas are made of an alloy of copper

and pewter, manufactured mainly at Birmingham and Nantes, the individual value being from 20 to 25 centimes.

Changes for the worse as far as English trade is concerned have passed over the trade of the Ivory Coast recently, but the way, even in my time, trade was carried on was thus. The native traders deal with the captains of English sailing vessels and the French factories, buying palm oil and kernels from the bush people with merchandise, and selling it to the native or foreign shippers. They get paid in manillas, which they can, when they wish, get changed again into merchandise either at the factory or on the trading ship. The manilla is, therefore, a kind of bank for the black trader, a something he can put his wealth into when he wants to store it for a time.

They have a singular system of commercial correspondence between the villages on the beach and the villages on the other side of the great lagoon that separates it from the mainland. Each village on the shore has its particular village on the other side of the lagoon, thus Allndja Badon is the interior commercial centre for Grand Jack on the beach, Abia for Anamaquoa, or Half Jack, and so on. Anamaquoa is only separated from its sister village by a little lagoon that is fordable, but the other towns have to communicate by means of canoes.

Grand Bassam, Assini, and Half Jack are the most important places on the Ivory Coast. The main portion of the first-named town is out of sight from seaboard, being some five miles up the Costa River, andall you can see on the beach are two large but lonesome-looking factories. Half Jack, Jack a Jack, or Anamaquoa—there is nothing like having plenty of names for one place in West Africa, because it leads people at home who don't know the joke to think there is more of you than there naturally is—gives its name to the bit of coastfrom Cape Palmas to Grand Bassam, this coast being called the Half Jack, or quite as often the Bristol Coast, and for many years it was the main point of call for the Guinea-

men, old-fashioned sailing vessels which worked the Bristol trade in the Bights.

This trade was established during the last century by Mr. Henry King, of Bristol, for supplying labour to the West Indies, and was further developed by his two sons, Richard, who hated men-o'-war like a quaker, and William who loved science, both very worthy gentlemen. After their time up till when I was first on the Coast, this firm carried on trade both on the Bristol Coast and down in Cameroon, which in old days bore the name of Little Bristol-in-Hell, but now the trade is in other hands.

According to Captain Binger, there are now about 30 sailing ships still working the Ivory Coast trade, two of them the property of an energetic American captain, but the greater part belonging to Bristol. Their voyage out from Bristol varies from 60 to 90 days, according as you get through the horse latitudes—so-called from the number of horses that used to die in this region of calms when the sailing vessels bringing them across from South America lay, week out and week in, short alike of wind and water.

In old days, when the Bristol ship got to the Coast she would call at the first village on it. Then the native chiefs and head men would come on board and haggle with the captain as to the quantity of goods he would let them have on trust, they covenanting to bring in exchange for them in a given time a certain number of slaves or so much produce. This arrangement being made, off sailed the Guineaman to his next village, where a similar game took place all the way down Coast to Grand Bassam.

When she had paid out the trust goods to the last village she would stand out to sea and work back to her first village of call on the Bristol Coast to pick up the promised produce, this arrangement giving the native traders time to collect it. In nine cases out of ten, however, it was not ready for her, so on she went to the next. By this time the Guineaman would present the spectacle of a farmhouse that had gone mad, grown masts, and run away to sea ; for the decks were protected from the

burning sun by a well-built thatch roof, and she lounged along heavy with the rank sea growth of these seas. Sometimes she would be unroofed by a tornado, sometimes seized by a pirate parasitic on the Guinea trade, but barring these interruptions to business she called regularly on her creditors, from some getting the promised payment, from others part of it, from others again only the renewal of the promise, and then when she had again reached her last point of call put out to sea once more and worked back again to the first creditor village. In those days she kept at this weary round until she got in all her debts, a process that often took her four or five years, and cost the lives of half her crew from fever, and then her consorts drafted a man or so on board her, and kept her going until she was full enough of pepper, gold, gum, ivory, and native gods to sail for Bristol. There, when the Guineaman came in, were grand doings for the small boys, what with parrots, oranges, bananas, &c., but sad times for most of those whose relatives and friends had left Bristol on her.

In much the same way, and with much the same risks the Bristol Coast trade goes on now, only there is little of it left, owing to the French system of suppressing trade. Palm oil is the modern equivalent to slaves, and just as in old days the former were trans-shipped from the coasting Guineaman to the transatlantic slavers, so now the palm oil is shipped off on to the homeward bound African steamers, while, as for the joys and sorrows, century change affects them not. So long as Western Africa remains the deadliest region on earth there will be joy over those who come up out of it; heartache and anxiety over those who are down there fighting as men fought of old for those things worth fighting for, God, Glory and Gold; and grief over those who are dead among all of us at home who are ill-advised enough to really care for men who have the pluck to go there.

During the smoke season when dense fogs hang over the Bight of Benin, the Bristol ships get very considerably sworn at by the steamers. They have letters for them, and they want oil off them; between ourselves, they want

oil off every created thing, and the Bristol boat is not easy to find. So the steamer goes dodging and fumbling about after her, swearing softly about wasting coal all the time, and more harshly still when he finds he has picked up the wrong Guineaman, only modified if she has stuff to send home, stuff which he conjures the Bristol captain by the love he bears him to keep, and ship by him when he is on his way home from windward ports, or to let him have forthwith.

Sometimes the Bristolman will signal to a passing steamer for a doctor. The doctors of the African and British African boats are much thought of all down the Coast, and are only second in importance to the doctor on board a telegraph ship, who, being a rare specimen, is regarded as, *ipso facto*, more gifted, so that people will save up their ailments for the telegraph ship's medical man, which is not a bad practice, as it leads commonly to their getting over those ailments one way or the other by the time the telegraph ship arrives. It is reported that one day one of the Bristolmen ran up an urgent signal to a passing mail steamer for a doctor, and the captain thereof ran up a signal of assent, and the doctor went below to get his medicines ready. Meanwhile, instead of displaying a patient gratitude, the Bristolman signalled "Repeat signal." "Give it 'em again," said the steamboat captain, "those Bristolmen ain't got no Board schools." Still the Bristolman kept bothering, running up her original signal, and in due course off went the doctor to her in the gig. When he returned his captain asked him, saying, "Pills, are they all mad on board that vessel or merely drunk as usual?" "Well," says the doctor, "that's curious, for it's the very same question Captain N. has asked me about you. He is very anxious about your mental health, and wants to know why you keep on signalling 'Haul to, or I will fire into you,'" and the story goes that an investigation of the code and the steamer's signal supported the Bristolman's reading, and the subject was dropped in steam circles.

Although the Bristolmen do not carry doctors, they are provided with grand medicine chests, the supply of

medicines in West Africa being frequently in the inverse ratio to the ability to administer them advantageously.

Inside the lid of these medicine chests is a printed paper of instructions, each drug having a number before its name, and a hint as to the proper dose after it. Thus, we will say, for example, 1 was jalap; 2, calomel; 3, croton oil; and 4, quinine. Once upon a time there was a Bristol captain, as good a man as need be and with a fine head on him for figures. Some of his crew were smitten with fever when he was out of number 4, so he argues that 2 and 2 are 4 all the world over, but being short of 2, it being a popular drug, he further argues 3 and 1 make 4 as well, and the dose of 4 being so much he makes that dose up out of jalap and croton oil. Some of the patients survived; at least, a man I met claimed to have done so. His report is not altogether reproducible in full, but, on the whole, the results of the treatment went more towards demonstrating the danger of importing raw abstract truths into everyday affairs than to encouraging one to repeat the experiment of arithmetical therapeutics.

CHAPTER IV

FISHING IN WEST AFRICA

THERE is one distinctive charm about fishing—its fascinations will stand any climate. You may sit crouching on ice over a hole inside the arctic circle, or on a Windsor chair by the side of the River Lea in the so-called temperate zone, or you may squat in a canoe on an equatorial river with the surrounding atmosphere 45 per cent. mosquito, and if you are fishing you will enjoy yourself; and what is even more important than this enjoyment, you will not embitter your present, nor endanger your future, by going home in a bad temper, whether you have caught anything or not, provided always that you are a true fisherman.

This is not the case with other sports; I have been assured by experienced men that it "makes one feel awfully bad" when, after carrying for hours a very heavy elephant gun, for example, through a tangled forest you have got a wretched bad chance of a shot at an elephant: and as for football, cricket, &c., well, I need hardly speak of the unchristian feelings they engender in the mind towards umpires and successful opponents.

Being, as above demonstrated, a humble, but enthusiastic devotee of fishing—I dare not say, as my great predecessor Dame Juliana Berners says, "with an angle," because my conscience tells me I am a born poacher—I need hardly remark that when I heard, from a reliable

authority at Gaboon, that there were lakes in the centre of the island of Corisco, and that these fresh-water lakes were fished annually by representative ladies from the villages on this island, and that their annual fishing was just about due, I decided that I must go there forthwith. Now, although Corisco is not more than twenty miles out to sea from the Continent, it is not a particularly easy place to get at nowadays, no vessels ever calling there; so I got, through the kindness of Dr. Nassau, a little schooner and a black crew, and, forgetting my solemn resolve, formed from the fruits of previous experiences, never to go on to an Atlantic island again, off I sailed. I will not go into the adventures of that voyage here. My reputation as a navigator was great before I left Gaboon. I had a record of having once driven my bowsprit through a conservatory, and once taken all the paint off one side of a smallpox hospital, to say nothing of repeatedly having made attempts to climb trees in boats I commanded; but when I returned, I had surpassed these things by having successfully got my mainmast jammed up a tap, and I had done sufficient work in discovering new sandbanks, rock shoals, &c., in Corisco Bay, and round Cape Esterias, to necessitate, or call for, a new edition of *The West African Pilot*.

Corisco Island is about three miles long by 1¾ wide: its latitude 0°56 N., long. 9°20½ E. Mr. Winwood Reade was about the last traveller to give a description of Corisco, and a very interesting description it is. He was there in the early sixties, and was evidently too fully engaged with a drunken captain and a mad Malay cook to go inland. In his days small trading vessels used to call at Corisco for cargo, but they do so no longer, all the trade in the Bay now being carried on at Messrs. Holt's factory on Little Eloby Island (an island nearer in shore), and on the mainland at Coco Beach, belonging to Messrs. Hatton and Cookson.

In Winwood Reade's days, too, there was a settlement of the American Presbyterian Society on Corisco, with a staff of white men. This has been abandoned to a native minister, because the Society found that facts did not

[To face page 76.

Batanga Canoes.

support their theory that the island would be more healthy than the mainland, the mortality being quite as great as at any continental station, so they moved on to the continent to be nearer their work. The only white people that are now on Corisco are two Spanish priests and three nuns; but of these good people I saw little or nothing, as my headquarters were with the Presbyterian native minister, Mr. Ibea, and there was war between him and the priests.

The natives are Benga, a coast tribe now rapidly dying out. They were once a great tribe, and in the old days, when the slaves and the whalers haunted Corisco Bay, these Benga were much in demand as crew men, in spite of the reputation they bore for ferocity. Nowadays the grown men get their living by going as travelling agents for the white merchants into the hinterland behind Corisco Bay, amongst the very dangerous and savage tribes there, and when one of them has made enough money by this trading, he comes back to Corisco, and rests, and luxuriates in the ample bosom of his family until he has spent his money—then he gets trust from the white trader, and goes to the Bush again, pretty frequently meeting there the sad fate of the pitcher that went too often to the well, and getting killed by the hinterlanders.

On arriving at Corisco Island, I "soothed with a gift, and greeted with a smile" the dusky inhabitants. "Have you got any tobacco?" said they. "I have," I responded, and a friendly feeling at once arose. I then explained that I wanted to join the fishing party. They were quite willing, and said the ladies were just finishing planting their farms before the tornado season came on, and that they would make the peculiar, necessary baskets at once. They did not do so at once in the English sense of the term, but we all know there is no time south of 40°, and so I waited patiently, walking about the island.

Corisco is locally celebrated for its beauty. Winwood Reade says: "It is a little world in miniature, with its miniature forests, miniature prairies, miniature moun-

tains, miniature rivers, and miniature precipices on the sea-shore." In consequence partly of these things, and partly of the inhabitants' rooted idea that the proper way to any place on the island is round by the seashore, the paths of Corisco are as strange as several other things are in latitude 0, and, like the other things, they require understanding to get on with.

They start from the beach with the avowed intention of just going round the next headland because the tide happens to be in too much for you to go along by the beach; but, once started, their presiding genii might sing to the wayfarer Mr. Kipling's "The Lord knows where we shall go, dear lass, and the Deuce knows what we shall see." You go up a path off the beach gladly, because you have been wading in fine white sand over your ankles, and in banks of rotten and rotting seaweed, on which centipedes, and other catamumpuses, crawl in profusion, not to mention sand-flies, &c., and the path makes a plunge inland, as much as to say, "Come and see our noted scenery," and having led you through a miniature swamp, a miniature forest, and a miniature prairie, "It's a pity," says the path, "not to call at So-and-so's village now we are so near it," and off it goes to the village through a patch of grass or plantation. It wanders through the scattered village calling at houses, for some time, and then says, "Bless me, I had nearly forgotten what I came out for; we must hurry back to that beach," and off it goes through more scenery, landing you ultimately about fifty yards off the place where you first joined it, in consequence of the South Atlantic waves flying in foam and fury against a miniature precipice—the first thing they have met that dared stay their lordly course since they left Cape Horn or the ice walls of the Antarctic.

At last the fishing baskets were ready, and we set off for the lakes by a path that plunged into a little ravine, crossed a dried swamp, went up a hill, and on to an open prairie, in the course of about twenty minutes. Passing over this prairie, and through a wood, we came

to another prairie, like most things in Corisco just then (August) dried up, for it was the height of the dry season. On this prairie we waited for some of the representative ladies from other villages to come up; for without their presence our fishing would not have been legal. When you wait in West Africa it eats into your lifetime to a considerable extent, and we spent half-an-hour or so standing howling, in prolonged, intoned howls, for the absent ladies, notably grievously for On-gou-ta; and when they came not, we threw ourselves down on the soft, fine, golden-brown grass, in the sun, and all, with the exception of myself, went asleep. After about two and a half hours I was aroused from the contemplation of the domestic habits of some beetles, by hearing a crackle, crackle, interspersed with sounds like small pistols going off, and looking round saw a fog of blue-brown smoke surmounting a rapidly-advancing wall of red fire.

I rose, and spread the news among my companions, who were sleeping, with thumps and kicks. Shouting at a sleeping African is labour lost. And then I made a bee-line for the nearest green forest wall of the prairie, followed by my companions. Yet, in spite of some very creditable sprint performances on their part, three members of the band got scorched. Fortunately, however, our activity landed us close to the lakes, so the scorched ones spent the rest of the afternoon sitting in mud-holes, comforting themselves with the balmy black slime. The other ladies turned up soon after this, and said that the fire had arisen from some man having set fire to a corner of the prairie some days previously, to make a farm; he had thought the fire was out round his patch, whereas it was not, but smouldering in the tussocks of grass, and the wind had sprung up that afternoon from a quarter that fanned it up. I said, "People should be very careful of fire," and the scorched ladies profoundly agreed with me, and said things I will not repeat here, regarding "that fool man" and his female ancestors.

The lakes are pools of varying extent and depth, in

the bed-rock[1] of the island, and the fact that they are surrounded by thick forests on every side, and that the dry season is the cool season on the Equator, prevents them from drying up.

Most of these lakes are encircled by a rim of rock, from which you jump down into knee-deep black slime, and then, if you are a representative lady, you waddle, and squeal, and grunt, and skylark generally on your way to the water in the middle. If it is a large lake you are working, you and your companions drive in two rows of stakes, cutting each other more or less at right angles, more or less in the middle of the lake, so as to divide it up into convenient portions. Then some ladies with their specially shaped baskets form a line, with their backs to the bank, and their faces to the water-space, in the enclosure, holding the baskets with one rim under water. The others go into the water, and splash with hands, and feet, and sticks, and, needless to say, yell hard all the time. The naturally alarmed fish fly from them, intent on getting into the mud, and are deftly scooped up by the peck by the ladies in their baskets. In little lakes the staking is not necessary, but the rest of the proceedings are the same. Some of the smaller lakes are too deep to be thus fished at all, being, I expect, clefts in the rock, such as you see in other parts of the island, sometimes 30 or 40 feet deep.

The usual result of the day's fishing is from twelve to fifteen bushels of a common mud-fish,[2] which is very good eating. The spoils are divided among the representative ladies, and they take them back to their respective villages and distribute them. Then ensues, that same evening, a tremendous fish supper, and the fish left over are smoked and carefully kept as a delicacy, to make sauce with, &c., until the next year's fishing day comes round.

The waters of West Africa, salt, brackish, and fresh

[1] Specimens of rock identified by the Geological Survey, London, as cretaceous, and said by other geologists up here to be possibly Jurassic.

[2] *Clarias lazdaja.*

abound with fish, and many kinds are, if properly cooked, excellent eating. For culinary purposes you may divide the fish into sea-fish, lagoon-fish, and river-fish; the first division, the sea-fish, are excellent eating, and are in enormous quantities, particularly along the Windward Coast on the Great West African Bank. South of this, at the mouths of the Oil rivers, they fall off, from a culinary standpoint, though scientifically they increase in charm, as you find hereabouts fishes of extremely early types, whose relations have an interesting series of monuments in the shape of fossils, in the sandstone; but if primeval man had to live on them when they were alive together, I am sorry for him, for he might just as well have eaten mud, and better, for then he would not have run the risk of getting choked with bones. On the South-West Coast the culinary value goes up again; there are found quantities of excellent deep-sea fish, and round the mouths of the rivers, shoals of bream and grey mullet.

The lagoon-fish are not particularly good, being as a rule supremely muddy and bony; they have their uses, however, for I am informed that they indicate to Lagos when it may expect an epidemic; to this end they die, in an adjacent lagoon, and float about upon its surface, wrong side up, until decomposition does its work. Their method of prophecy is a sound one, for it demonstrates (*a*) that the lagoon drinking water is worse than usual; (*b*) if it is not already fatal they will make it so.

The river-fish of the Gold Coast are better than those of the mud-sewers of the Niger Delta, because the Gold Coast rivers are brisk sporting streams, with the exception of the Volta, and at a short distance inland they come down over rocky rapids with a stiff current. The fish of the upper waters of the Delta rivers are better than those down in the mangrove-swamp region; and in the South-West Coast rivers, with which I am personally well acquainted, the up-river fish are excellent in quality, on account of the swift current. I will however leave culinary considerations, because cooking is a subject upon which I am liable to become diffuse

and we will turn to the consideration of the sporting side of fishing.

Now, there is one thing you will always hear the Gold Coaster (white variety) grumbling about, "There is no sport." He has only got himself to blame. Let him try and introduce the Polynesian practice of swimming about in the surf, without his clothes, and with a suitable large, sharp knife, slaying sharks—there's no end of sharks on the Gold Coast, and no end of surf. The Rivermen have the same complaint, and I may recommend that they should try spearing sting-rays, things that run sometimes to six feet across the wings, and every inch of them wicked, particularly the tail. There is quite enough danger in either sport to satisfy a Sir Samuel Baker; for myself, being a nervous, quiet rational individual, a large cat-fish in a small canoe supplies sufficient excitement.

The other day I went out for a day's fishing on an African river, I and two black men, in a canoe, in company with a round net, three stout fishing-lines, three paddles, Dr. Günther's *Study of Fishes*, some bait in an old Morton's boiled-mutton tin, a little manioc, stinking awfully (as is its wont), a broken calabash baler, a lot of dirty water to sit in, and happy and contented minds. I catalogue these things because they are either essential to, or inseparable from, a good day's sport in West Africa. Yes, even *I*, asks my vic——friends down there, I feel sure they will tell you that they never had such experiences before my arrival. I fear they will go on and say, "Never again!" and that it was all my fault, which it was not. When things go well they ascribe it, and their survival, to Providence or their own precautions; when things are merely usual in horror, it's my fault, which is a rank inversion of the truth, for it is only when circumstances get beyond my control, and Providence takes charge, that accidents happen. I will demonstrate this by continuing my narrative. We paddled away, far up a mangrove creek, and then went up against the black mud-bank, with its great network of grey-white roots, surmounted by the closely-interlaced

black-green foliage. Absolute silence reigned, as it can only reign in Africa in a mangrove swamp. The water-laden air wrapped round us like a warm, wet blanket. The big mangrove flies came silently to feed on us and leave their progeny behind them in the wounds to do likewise. The stink of the mud, strong enough to break a window, mingled fraternally with that of the sour manioc.

I was reading, the negroes, always quiet enough when fishing, were silently carrying on that great African native industry—scratching themselves—so, with our lines over side, life slid away like a dreamless sleep, until the middle man hooked a cat-fish. It came on board with an awful grunt, right in the middle of us; flop, swish, scurry and yell followed; I tucked the study of fishes in general under my arm and attended to this individual specimen, shouting "Lef em, lef em; hev em for water one time, you sons of unsanctified house lizards,"[1] and such like valuable advice and admonition. The man in the more remote end of the canoe made an awful swipe at the 3 ft.-long, grunting, flopping, yellow-grey, slimy thing, but never reached it owing to the paddle meeting in mid-air with the flying leg of the man in front of him, drawing blood profusely. I really fancy about this time, that, barring the cat-fish and myself, the occupants of the canoe were standing on their heads, with a view of removing their lower limbs from the terrible pectoral and dorsal fins, with which our prey made such lively play.

"*Brevi spatio interjecto*," as Cæsar says, in the middle of a bad battle, over went the canoe, while the cat-fish went off home with the line and hook. One black man went to the bank, whither, with a blind prescience of our fate, I had flung, a second before, the most valuable occupant of the canoe, *The Study of Fishes*. I went personally to investigate fluvial deposit *in situ*. When I returned to the surface—accompanied by great swirls of mud and great bubbles of the gases of decomposition I had liberated on my visit to the bottom of the river—

[1] Translation: "Leave it alone! Leave it alone! Throw it into the water at once! What did you catch it for?"

I observed the canoe floating bottom upwards, accompanied by Morton's tin, the calabash, and the paddles, while on the bank one black man was engaged in hauling the other one out by the legs; fortunately this one's individual god had seen to it that his toes should become entangled in the net, and this floated, and so indicated to his companion where he was, when he had dived into the mud and got fairly embedded.

Now it's my belief that the most difficult thing in the world is to turn over a round-bottomed canoe that is wrong side up, when you are in the water with the said canoe. The next most difficult thing is to get into the canoe, after accomplishing triumph number one, and had it not been for my black friends that afternoon, I should not have done these things successfully, and there would be by now another haunted creek in West Africa, with a mud and blood bespattered ghost trying for ever to turn over the ghost of a little canoe. However, all ended happily. We collected all our possessions, except the result of the day's fishing—the cat-fish—but we had had as much of him as we wanted, and so, adding a thankful mind to our contented ones, went home.

None of us gave a verbatim report of the incident. I held my tongue for fear of not being allowed out fishing again, and I heard my men giving a fine account of a fearful fight, with accompanying prodigies of valour, that we had had with a witch crocodile. I fancy that must have been just their way of putting it, because it is not good form to be frightened by cat-fish on the West Coast, and I cannot for the life of me remember even having seen a witch crocodile that afternoon.

I must, however, own that native methods of fishing are usually safe, though I fail to see what I had to do in producing the above accident. The usual method of dealing with a cat-fish is to bang him on the head with a club, and then break the spiny fins off, for they make nasty wounds that are difficult to heal, and very painful.

The native fishing-craft is the dug-out canoe in its various local forms. The Accra canoe is a very safe

Falls on the Tongue River.

[*To face page* 84.

Loango Canoe with Mat Sails.

and firm canoe for work of any sort except heavy cargo, and it is particularly good for surf; it is, however, slower than many other kinds. The canoe that you can get the greatest pace out of is undoubtedly the Adooma, which is narrow and flat-bottomed, and simply flies over the water. The paddles used vary also with locality, and their form is a mere matter of local fashion, for they all do their work well. There is the leaf-shaped Kru paddle, the trident-shaped Accra, the long-lozenged Niger, and the long-handled, small-headed Igalwa paddle; and with each of these forms the native, to the manner born, will send his canoe flying along with that unbroken sweep which I consider the most luxurious and perfect form of motion on earth.

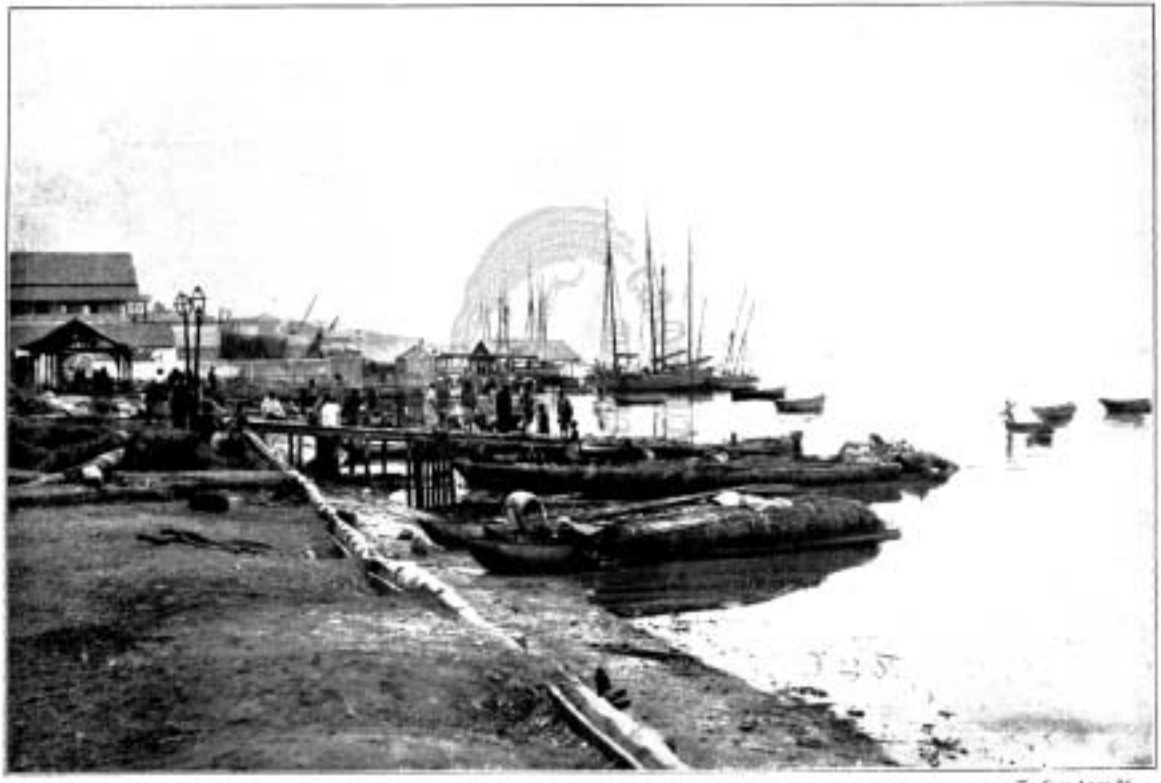
It is when it comes to sailing that the African is inferior. He does not sail half as much as he might, but still pretty frequently. The materials of which the sails are made vary immensely in different places, and the most beautiful are those at Loanda, which are made of small grass mats, with fringes, sewn together, and are of a warm rich sand-colour. Next in beauty comes the branch of a palm, or other tree, stuck in the bows, and least in beauty is the fisherman's own damaged waist-cloth. I remember it used to seem very strange to me at first, to see my companion in a canoe take off his clothing and make a sail with it, on a wind springing up behind us. The very strangest sail I ever sailed under was a black man's blue trousers, they were tied waist upwards to a cross-stick, the legs neatly crossed, and secured to the thwarts of the canoe. You cannot well tack, or carry out any neat sailing evolutions with any of the African sails, particularly with the last-named form. The shape of the African sail is almost always in appearance a triangle, and fastened to a cross-stick which is secured to an upright one. It is not the form, however, that prevents it from being handy, but the way it is put up, almost always without sheets, for river and lake work, and it is tied together with tie tie—bush rope. If you should personally be managing one, and trouble threatens, take my advice, and take the mast

out one time, and deal with that tie tie palaver at your leisure. Never mind what people say about this method not being seaman-like—you survive.

The mat sails used for sea-work are spread by a bamboo sprit. There is a single mast, to the head of which the sail is either hoisted by means of a small line run through the mast, or, more frequently, made fast with a seizing. Such a sail is worked by means of a sheet and a brace on the sprit, usually by one man, whose companion steers by a paddle over the stern; sometimes, however, one man performs both duties. Now and again you will find the luff of the sail bowlined out with another stick. This is most common round Sierra Leone.

The appliances for catching fish are, firstly, fish traps, sometimes made of hollow logs of trees, with one end left open and the other closed. One of these is just dropped alongside the bank, left for a week or so, until a fish family makes a home in it, and then it is removed with a jerk. Then there are fish-baskets made from split palm-stems tied together with tie tie; they are circular and conical, resembling our lobster pots and eel baskets, and they are usually baited with lumps of kank soaked in palm oil. Then there are drag nets made of pineapple fibre, one edge weighted with stones tied in bunches at intervals; as a rule these run ten to twenty-five feet long, but in some places they are much longer. The longest I ever saw was when out fishing in the lovely harbour of San Paul de Loanda. This was over thirty feet and was weighted with bunches of clam shells, and made of European yarn, as indeed most nets are when this is procurable by the natives, and it was worked by three canoes which were being poled about, as is usual in Loanda Harbour. Then there is the universal hook and line, the hook either of European make or the simple bent pin of our youth.

But my favourite method, and the one by which I got most of my fish up-rivers or in creeks is the stockade trap. These are constructed by driving in stakes close together, leaving one opening, not in the middle of the



To face page 80.

ST. PAUL DO LOANDA.

stockade, but towards the up-river end. In tidal waters these stockades are visited daily, at nearly low tide, for the high tide carries the fish in behind the stockade, and leaves them there on falling. Up-river, above tide water, the stockades are left for several days, in order to allow the fish to congregate. Then the opening is closed up, the fisher-women go inside and throw out the water and collect the fish. There is another kind of stockade that gives great sport. During the wet season the terrific rush of water tears off bits of bank in such rivers as the Congo, and Ogowé, where, owing to the continual fierce current of fresh water the brackish tide waters do not come far up the river, so that the banks are not shielded by a great network of mangrove roots. In the Ogowé a good many of the banks are composed of a stout clay, and so the pieces torn off hang together, and often go sailing out to sea, on the current, waving their bushes, and even trees, gallantly in the broad Atlantic, out of sight of land. Bits of the Congo Free State are great at sea-faring too, and owing to the terrific stream of the great Zaire, which spreads a belt of fresh water over the surface of the ocean 200 miles from land, ships fall in with these floating islands, with their trees still flourishing. The Ogowé is not so big as the Congo, but it is a very respectable stream even for the great continent of rivers, and it pours into the Atlantic, in the wet season, about 1,750,000 cubic feet of fresh water per second, on which float some of these islands. But by no means every island gets out to sea, many of them get into slack water round corners in the Delta region of the Ogowé and remain there, collecting all sorts of *débris* that comes down on the flood water, getting matted more and more firmly by the floating grass, every joint of which grows on the smallest opportunity. In many places these floating islands are of considerable size; one I heard of was large enough to induce a friend of mine to start a coffee plantation on it; unfortunately the wretched thing came to pieces when he had cut down its trees and turned the soil up. And one I saw in the Karkola river, was a weird affair.

It was in the river opposite our camp, and very slowly, but perceptibly, it went round and round in an orbit, although it was about half an acre in extent. A good many of these bits of banks do not attain to the honour of becoming islands, but get on to sand-banks in their early youth, near a native town, to the joy of the inhabitants, who forthwith go off to them, and drive round them a stockade of stakes, firmly anchoring them. Thousands of fishes then congregate round the little island inside the stockade, for the rich feeding in among the roots and grass, and the affair is left a certain time. Then the entrance to the stockade is firmly closed up, and the natives go inside and bale out the water, and catch the fish in baskets, tearing the island to pieces, with shouts and squeals of exultation. It's messy, but it's amusing, and you get tremendous catches.

A very large percentage of fish traps are dedicated to the capture of shrimp and craw-fish, which the natives value highly when smoked, using them to make a sauce for their kank; among these is the shrimp-basket. These baskets are tied on sticks laid out in parallel lines of considerable extent. They run about three inches in diameter, and their length varies with the place that is being worked. The stakes are driven into the mud, and to each stake is tied a basket with a line of tie tie, the basket acting as a hat to the stake when the tide is ebbing; as the tide comes in, it lowers the basket into the current and carries into its open end large quantities of shrimps, which get entangled and packed by the force of the current into the tapering end of the basket, which is sometimes eight or ten feet from the mouth. You can always tell where there is a line of these baskets by seeing the line of attendant sea-gulls all solemnly arranged with their heads to win'ard, sea-gull fashion.

Another device employed in small streams for the capture of either craw-fish or small fish is a line of calabashes, or earthen pots with narrow mouths; these are tied on to a line, I won't say with tie tie, because I have said that irritating word so often, but still you understand they are; this line is tied to a tree with

Round a Kacongo Camp Fire. [*To face p.* 88.

more, and carried across the stream, sufficiently slack to submerge the pots, and then to a tree on the other bank, where it is secured with the same material. A fetish charm is then secured to it to take care that any one who interferes with the trap, save the rightful owner, will "swell up and burst," and then the trap is left for the night, the catch being collected in the morning.

Single pots, well baited with bits of fish and with a suitable stone in to keep them steady, are frequently used alongside the bank. These are left for a day or more, and then the owner with great care crawls along the edge of the bank and claps on a lid and secures the prey.

Hand nets of many kinds are used. The most frequent form is the round net, weighted all round its outer edge. This is used by one man, and is thrown with great deftness and grace, in shallow waters. I suppose one may hardly call the long wreaths of palm and palm branches, used by the Loango and Kacongo coast native for fishing the surf with, nets, but they are most effective. When the Calemma (the surf) is not too bad, two or more men will carry this long thick wreath out into it, and then drop it and drag it towards the shore. The fish fly in front of it on to the beach, where they fall victims to the awaiting ladies, with their baskets. Another very quaint set of devices is employed by the Kruboys whenever they go to catch their beloved land and shore crabs. I remember once thinking I had providentially lighted on a beautiful bit of Ju Ju; the whole stretch of mud beach had little lights dotted over it on the ground. I investigated. They were crab-traps. "Bottle of Beer," "The Prince of Wales," "Jane Ann," and "Pancake" had become—by means we will not go into here—possessed of bits of candle, and had cut them up and put in front of them pieces of wood in an ingenious way. The crab, a creature whose intelligence is not sufficiently appreciated, fired with a scientific curiosity, went to see what the light was made of, and then could not escape, or perhaps did not try to escape, but stood spell-bound at the beauty of the light; anyhow, they fell victims to

their spirit of inquiry. I have also seen drop-traps put for crabs round their holes. In this case the sense of the beauty of light in the crab is not relied on, and once in he is shut in, and cannot go home and communicate the result of his investigations to his family.

Yet, in spite of all these advantages and appliances above cited, I grieve to say the West African, all along the Coast, descends to the unsportsmanlike trick of poisoning. Certain herbs are bruised and thrown into the water, chiefly into lagoons and river-pools. The method is effective, but I should doubt whether it is wholesome. These herbs cause the fish to rise to the surface stupefied, when they are scooped up with a calabash. Other herbs cause the fish to lie at the bottom, also stupefied, and the water in the pool is thrown out, and they are collected.

More as a pastime than a sport I must class the shooting of the peculiar hopping mud-fish by the small boys with bows and arrows, but this is the only way you can secure them as they go about star-gazing with their eyes on the tops of their heads, instead of attending to baited hooks, and their hearing (or whatever it is) is so keen that they bury themselves in the mud-banks too rapidly for you to net them. Spearing is another very common method of fishing. It is carried on at night, a bright light being stuck in the bow of the canoe, while the spearer, crouching, screens his eyes from the glare with a plantain leaf, and drops his long-hafted spear into the fish as they come up to look at the light. It is usually the big bream that are caught in this way out in the sea, and the carp up in fresh water.

The manners and customs of many West African fishes are quaint. I have never yet seen that fish the natives often tell me about that is as big as a man, only thicker, and which walks about on its fins at night, in the forest, so I cannot vouch for it; nor for that other fish that hates the crocodile, and follows her up and destroys her eggs, and now and again dedicates itself to its hate, and goes down her throat, and then spreads out its spiny fins and kills her.

The fish I know personally are interesting in quieter ways. As for instance the strange electrical fish, which sometimes have sufficient power to kill a duck and which are much given to congregating in sunken boats, causing much trouble when the boat has to be floated again, because the natives won't go near them, to bale her out.

Then there is that deeply trying creature the Ning Ning fish, who, when you are in some rivers in fresh water and want to have a quiet night's rest, just as you have tucked in your mosquito bar carefully and successfully, comes alongside and serenades you, until you have to get up and throw things at it with a prophetic feeling, amply supported by subsequent experience, that hordes of mosquitos are busily ensconcing themselves inside your mosquito bar. What makes the Ning Ning—it is called after its idiotic song—so maddening is that it never seems to be where you have thrown the things at it. You could swear it was close to the bow of the canoe when you shied that empty soda-water bottle or that ball of your precious india-rubber at it, but instantly comes "ning, ning, ning" from the stern of the canoe. It is a ventriloquist or goes about in shoals, I do not know which, for the latter and easier explanation seems debarred by their not singing in chorus; the performance is undoubtedly a solo; any one experienced in this fish soon finds out that it is not driven away or destroyed by an artillery of missiles, but merely lies low until its victim has got under his mosquito curtain, and resettled his mosquito palaver—and then back it comes with its "ning ning."

A similar affliction is the salt-water drum-fish, with its "bum-bum." Loanda Harbour abounds with these, and so does Chiloango. In the bright moonlight nights I have looked overside and seen these fish in a wreath round the canoe, with their silly noses against the side, "bum-bumming" away; whether they admire the canoe, or whether they want it to come on and fight it out, I do not know, because my knowledge of the different kinds of fishes and of their internal affairs is

derived from Dr. Günther's great work, and that contains no section on ichthyological psychology. The West African natives have, I may say, a great deal of very curious information on the thoughts of fishes, but, much as I liked those good people, I make it a hard and fast rule to hold on to my common-sense and keep my belief for religious purposes when it comes to these deductions from natural phenomena—not that I display this mental attitude externally, for there is always in their worst and wildest fetish notions an underlying element of truth. The fetish of fish is too wide a subject to enter on here, it acts well because it gives a close season to river and lagoon fish; the natives round Lake Ayzingo, for example, saying that if the first fishes that come up into the lake in the great dry season are killed, the rest of the shoal turn back, so on the arrival of this vanguard they are treated most carefully, talked to with "a sweet mouth," and given things. The fishes that form these shoals are *Hemichromis fasciatus* and *Chromis ogowensis*.

I know no more charming way of spending an afternoon than to leisurely paddle alone to the edge of the Ogowé sand bank in the dry season, and then lie and watch the ways of the water-world below. If you keep quiet, the fishes take no notice of you, and go on with their ordinary avocations, under your eyes, hunting, and feeding, and playing, and fighting, happily and cheerily, until one of the dreaded raptorial fishes appears upon the scene, and then there is a general scurry. Dreadful warriors are the little fishes that haunt sand banks (*Alestis Kingsleyæ*) and very bold, for when you put your hand down in the water, with some crumbs, they first make two or three attempts to frighten it, by sidling up at it and butting, but on finding there's no fight in the thing, they swagger into the palm of your hand and take what is to be got with an air of conquest; but before the supply is exhausted, there always arises a row among themselves, and the gallant bulls, some two inches long, will spin round and butt each other for a second or so, and then spin round again, and flap each

other with their tails, their little red-edged fins and gill-covers growing crimson with fury. I never made out how you counted points in these fights, because no one ever seemed a scale the worse after even the most desperate duels.

Most of the West Coast tribes are inveterate fishermen. The Gold Coast native regards fishing as a low pursuit, more particularly oyster-fishing, or I should say oyster-gathering, for they are collected chiefly from the lower branches of the mangrove-trees; this occupation is, indeed, regarded as being only fit for women, and among all tribes the villages who turn their entire attention to fishing are regarded as low down in the social scale. This may arise from fetish reasons, but the idea certainly gains support from the conduct of the individual fisherman. Do not imagine Brother Anglers, that I am hinting that the Gentle Art is bad for the moral nature of people like you and me, but I fear it is bad for the African. You see, the African, like most of us, can resist anything but temptation—he will resist attempts to reform him, attempts to make him tell the truth, attempts to clothe, and keep him tidy, &c., and he will resist these powerfully; but give him real temptation and he succumbs, without the European preliminary struggle. He has by nature a kleptic bias, and you see being out at night fishing, he has chances—temptations, of succumbing to this—and so you see a man who has left his home at evening with only the intention of spearing fish in his mind, goes home in the morning pretty often with his missionary's ducks, his neighbours' plantains, and a few odd trifles from the traders' beaches, in his canoe, and the outer world says, "Dem fisherman, all time, all same for one, with tief man."[1]

The Accras, who are employed right down the whole West Coast, thanks to the valuable education given them by the Basel Mission as cooks, carpenters, and coopers, cannot resist fishing, let their other avocations be what they may. A friend of mine the other day had a new Accra cook. The man cooked well, and my friend

[1] Translation: "All fishermen are thieves."

vaunted himself, and was content for the first week. At the beginning of the second week the cooking was still good, but somehow or other, there was just the suspicion of a smell of fish about the house. The next day the suspicion merged into certainty. The third day the smell was insupportable, and the atmosphere unfit to support human life, but obviously healthy for flies.

The cook was summoned, and asked by Her Britannic Majesty's representative "Where that smell came from?" He said he "could not smell it, and he did not know." Fourth day, thorough investigation of the premises revealed the fact that in the back-yard there was a large clothes-horse which had been sent out by my friend's wife to air his clothes; this was literally converted into a screen by strings of fish in the process of drying, *i.e.*, decomposing in the sun.

The affair was eliminated from the domestic circle and cast into the Ocean by seasoned natives; and awful torture in this world and the next promised to the cook if he should ever again embark in the fish trade. The smell gradually faded from the house, but the poor cook, bereaved of his beloved pursuit, burst out all over in boils, and took to religious mania and drink, and so had to be sent back to Accra, where I hope he lives happily, surrounded by his beloved objects.

CHAPTER V

FETISH

Wherein the student of Fetish determines to make things quite clear this time, with results that any sage knowing the subject and the student would have safely prophesied ; to which are added some remarks concerning the position of ancestor worship in West Africa.

THE final object of all human desire is a knowledge of the nature of God. The human methods, or religions, employed to gain this object are divisible into three main classes,

Firstly, the submission to and acceptance of a direct divine message ;

Secondly, the attempt by human intellectual power to separate the conception of God from material phenomena, and regard Him as a thing apart and unconditioned ;

Thirdly, the attempt to understand Him as manifest in natural phenomena.

I personally am constrained to follow this last and humblest method, and accept as its exposition Spinoza's statement of it, " Since without God nothing can exist or be conceived, it is evident that all natural phenomena involve and express the conception of God, as far as their essence and perfection extends. So we have a greater and more perfect knowledge of God in proportion to our knowledge of natural phenomena. Conversely (since the knowledge of an effect through a cause is the same thing as the knowledge of a particular property of a cause), the greater our knowledge of natural phenomena

the more perfect is our knowledge of the essence of God, which is the cause of all things."[1] But I have a deep respect for all other forms of religion and for all men who truly believe, for in them clearly there is this one great desire of the knowledge of the nature of God, and "*Ein guter Mensch in seinem dunkeln Drange Ist sich des rechten Weges wohl bewusst.*" Nevertheless the most tolerant human mind is subject to a feeling of irritation over the methods whereby a fellow-creature strives to attain his end, particularly if those methods are a sort of heresy to his own, and therefore it is a most unpleasant thing for any religious-minded person to speak of a religion unless he either profoundly believes or disbelieves in it. For, if he does the one, he has the pleasure of praise; if he does the other, he has the pleasure of war, but the thing in between these is a thing that gives neither pleasure; it is like quarrelling with one's own beloved relations. Thus it is with Fetish and me. I cannot say I either disbelieve or believe in it, for, on the one hand, I clearly see it is a religion of the third class; but, on the other, I know that Fetish is a religion that is regarded by my fellow white men as the embodiment of all that is lowest and vilest in man—not altogether without cause. Before speaking further on it, however, I must say what I mean by Fetish, for "the word of late has got ill sorted."

I mean by Fetish the religion of the natives of the Western Coast of Africa, where they have not been influenced either by Christianity or Mohammedanism. I sincerely wish there were another name than Fetish which we could use for it, but the natives have different names for their own religion in different districts, and I do not know what other general name I could suggest, for I am sure that the other name sometimes used in place of Fetish, namely, Ju Ju, is, for all the fine wild sound of it, only a modification of the French word for toy or doll, *joujou*. The French claim to have visited West Africa in the fourteenth century, prior to the Portuguese, and whether this claim can be sustained on

[1] Of the Divine Law, *Tractatus Theologico Politicus*, Spinoza.

historic evidence or no, it is certain that the French have been on the coast in considerable numbers since the fifteenth century, and no doubt have long called the little objects they saw the natives valuing so strangely *joujoux*, just as I have heard many a Frenchman do down there in my time. Therefore, believing Ju Ju to mean doll or toy, I do not think it is so true a word as Fetish; and, after all, West Africa has a prior right to the use of this word Fetish, for it has grown up out of the word *Feitiço* used by the Portuguese navigators who rediscovered West Africa with all its wealth and worries for modern Europe. These worthy voyagers, noticing the veneration paid by Africans to certain objects, trees, fish, idols and so on, very fairly compared these objects with the amulets, talismans, charms, and little images of saints they themselves used, and called those things similarly used by the Africans *Feitiço*, a word derived from the Latin *factitius*, in the sense magically artful. Modern French and English writers have adopted this word from the Portuguese; but it is a modern word in its present use. It is not in Johnson, and the term *Fétichisme* was introduced by de Brosses in his remarkable book, *Du Culte des Dieux fetiches*, 1760; but doubtless, as Professor Tylor points out, it has obtained a great currency from Comte's use of it to denote a general theory of primitive religion. Professor Tylor, most unfortunately for us who are interested in West African religion, confines the use of the word to one department of his theory of animism only—namely to the doctrine of spirits embodied in, or attached to or conveying influence through certain material objects.[1]

I do not in the least deny Professor Tylor's right to use the word Fetish[2] in that restricted sense in his

[1] *Primitive Culture*, E. B. Tylor, p. 144.

[2] Professor Tylor kindly allowed me to place this statement before him, and he says that as the word Fetish, with the sense of the use of bones, claws, stones, and such objects as receptacles of spiritual influences, has had nearly two centuries of established usage, it would not be easy to set it aside, and he advises me to use the term West African religion, or in some way make my meaning clear without expecting to upset the established nomenclature of comparative ethnology.

general study of comparative religion. I merely wish to mention that you cannot use it in this restricted sense, but want the whole of his grand theory of animism wherewith to describe the religion of the West Africans. For although there is in that religion a heavy percentage of embodied spirits, there is also a heavier percentage of unembodied spirits—spirits that have no embodiment in matter, and spirits that only occasionally embody themselves in matter.

Take, for example, the gods of the Ewe and Tshi.[1] There is amongst them Tando, the native high god of Ashantee. He appears to his priesthood as a giant, tawny-skinned, lank-haired, and wearing the Ashantee robe. But when visiting the laity, on whom he is exceedingly hard, he comes in pestilence and tempest, or, for more individual village visitations, as a small and miserable boy, desolate and crying for help and kindness, which, when given to him, Tando repays by killing off his benefactors and their fellow-villagers with a certain disease. This trick, I may remark, is not confined to Tando, for several other West African gods use it when sacrifices to them are in arrears; and I am certain it is more at the back of outcast children being neglected than is either sheer indifference to suffering or cruelty. Because, fearing the disease, your native will be far more likely to remember he is in debt to the god and go and pay an instalment, than to take in that child whom he thinks is the god who has come to punish.

But you have only to look through Ellis's important works, the *Tshi-speaking, Ewe-speaking, and Yoruba-speaking peoples of the West Coast of Africa*, to find many instances of the gods of Fetish who do not require a material object to manifest themselves in. And I, while in West Africa, have often been struck by incidents that have made this point clear to me. When I have been out with native companions after nightfall, they pretty nearly always saw an apparition of some

[1] This word is pronounced by the natives and by people knowing them, Cheuwe, as Ellis undoubtedly knew, but presumably he spelt it Tshi to please the authorities.

sort, frequently apparitions of different sorts, in our path ahead. Then came a pause, and after they had seen the apparition vanish, on we went—not cheerily, however, until we were well past the place where it had been seen. This place they closely examined, and decided whether it was an Abambo, or Manu, or whatever name these spirit classes had in their local language, or whether it was something worse that had been there, such as a Sasabonsum or Ombuiri.

They knew which it was from the physical condition of the spot. Either there was nothing there but ordinary path stuff; or there was white ash, or there was a log or rock, or tree branch, and the reason for the different emotions with which they regarded this latter was very simple, for it had been an inferior class spirit, one that their charms and howled incantations could guard them against. When there was ash, it had been a witch destroyed by the medicine they had thrown at it, or a medium class spirit they could get protection from "in town." But if "he left no ash" the rest of our march was a gloomy one; it was a bad business, and unless the Fetish authorities in town chose to explain that it was merely a demand for so much white calico, or a goat, &c., some one of our party would certainly get ill.

Well do I remember our greatest terror when out at night on a forest path. I believe him to have been a Sasabonsum, but he was very widely distributed—that is to say we dreaded him on the forest paths round Mungo Mah Lobeh; we confidently expected to meet him round Calabar; and, to my disgust, for he was a hindrance, when I thought I had got away from his distribution zone, down in the Ogowé region, coming home one night with a Fan hunter from Fula to Kangwe, I saw some one coming down the path towards us, and my friend threw himself into the dense bush beside the path so as to give the figure a wide berth. It was the old symptom. You see what we object to in this spirit is that one side of him is rotting and putrifying, the other sound and healthy, and it all depends on which side of him you touch whether you see the dawn again

or no. Such being the case, and African bush paths being narrow, this spirit helps to make evening walks unpopular, for there are places in every bush path where, if you meet him, you must brush against him—places where the wet season's rains have made the path a narrow ditch, with clay incurved walls above your head—places where the path turns sharply round a corner—places where it runs between rock walls. Such being the case, the risk of rubbing against his rotting side is held to be so great that it is best avoided by staying at home in the village with your wives and families, and playing the tom-tom or the orchid-fibre-stringed harp, or, if you are a bachelor, sitting in the village club-house listening to the old ones talking like retired Colonels. Yet, however this may be, I should hesitate to call this half-rotten individual "a material object." Sometimes we had merry laughs after these meetings, for he was only So-and-so from the village—it was not him. Sometimes we had cold chills down the back, for we lost sight of him; under our eyes he went and he left no ash.

Take again Mbuiri of the Mpongwe, who comes in the form usually of a man; or Nkala, who comes as a crab; or the great Nzambi of the Fjort—they leave no ash—and so on. This subject of apparition forms is a very interesting one, and requires more investigation. For such gods as Nzambi Mpungu do not appear to human beings on earth at all, except in tempest and pestilence. The great gods next in order leave no ash. The witch, if he or she be destroyed, does leave ash, and the ordinary middle and lower class spirits leave the thing they have been in, so unaltered by their use of it that no one but a witch doctor can tell whether or no it has been possessed by a spirit.

You see therefore Fetish is in a way complex and cannot be got into "worship of a material object." There is no worship in West Africa of a material not so possessed, for material objects are regarded as in themselves so low down in the scale of things that nothing of the human grade would dream of worshipping them.

Moreover, apart from these apparitions, I do not think you can accurately use the word Fetish in its restricted sense to include the visions seen by witch-doctors, or incantations made of words possessing power in themselves, and yet these things are part and parcel of Fetish. In fact, not being a comparative ethnologist, but a student of West African religion, I wish to goodness those comparative ethnologists would get another word of their own, instead of using our own old West Coast one.

It is, however, far easier to state what Fetish is not, than to state what it is. Although a Darwinian to the core, I doubt if evolution in a neat and tidy perpendicular line, with Fetish at the bottom and Christianity at the top, represents the true state of things. It seems to me—I have no authority to fortify my position with, so it is only me—that things are otherwise in this matter. That there are lines of development in religious ideas, and that no form of religious idea is a thing restricted to one race, I will grant; but if you will make a scientific use of your imagination, most carefully on the lines laid down for that exercise by Professor Tyndall, I think you would see that the higher form of the Fetish idea is Brahmanism; and that the highest possible form it could attain to is shown by two passages in the works of absolutely white people to have already been reached—first in that passage from a poem by an author whose name I have never known, though I have known the lines these five-and-twenty years—

> "God of the granite and the rose,
> Soul of the lily and the bee,
> The mighty tide of being flows
> In countless channels, Lord, from Thee.
> It springs to life in grass and flowers,
> Through every range of being runs,
> And from Creation's mighty towers,
> Its glory flames in stars and suns"—

and secondly in this statement by Spinoza—"By the help of God, I mean the fixed and unchangeable order of nature, or chain of natural events, for I have said

before and shown elsewhere that the universal laws of nature, according to which all things exist and are determined, are only another name for the eternal decrees of God, which always involves eternal truth and necessity, so that to say everything happens according to natural laws, and to say everything is ordained by the decree and ordinance of God, is to say the same thing. Now, since the power in nature is identical with the power of God, by which alone all things happen and are determined, it follows that whatsoever man as a part of nature provides himself with to aid and preserve his existence, or whatsoever nature affords him without his help, is given him solely by the Divine power acting either through human nature or through external circumstances. So whatever human nature can furnish itself with by its own efforts to preserve its existence may be fitly termed the inward aid of God, whereas whatever else accrues to man's profit from outward causes may be called the external aid of God."[1]

Now both these utterances are magnificent Fetish, and because I accept them as true, I have said I neither believe nor disbelieve in Fetish. I could quote many more passages from acknowledged philosophers, particularly from Goethe. If you want, for example, to understand the position of man in Nature according to Fetish, there is, as far as I know, no clearer statement of it made than is made by Goethe in his superb *Prometheus*. By all means read it, for you cannot know how things really stand until you do.

This was brought home to me very keenly when I was first out in West Africa. I had made friends with a distinguished witch doctor, or, more correctly speaking, he had made friends with me. I was then living in a deserted house the main charm of which was that it was the house that Mr. H. M. Stanley had lived in while he was waiting for a boat home after his first crossing Africa. This charm had not kept the house tidy, and it was a beetlesome place by day, while after nightfall, if you wanted to see some of the best insect society in

[1] *The Vocation of the Hebrews*, Spinoza.

Africa, and have regular Walpurgis all round, you had only got to light a lamp; but these things were advantageous to an insect collector like myself, therefore I lodge no complaint against the firm of traders to whom that house belongs. Well, my friend the witch doctor used to call on me, and I apologetically confess I first thought his interest in me arose from material objects. I wronged that man in thought, as I have many others, for one night, about 11 p.m., I heard a pawing at the shutters—my African friends don't knock. I got up and opened the door, and there he was. I made some observations, which I regret now, about tobacco at that time of night, and he said, "No. You be big man, suppose pusson sick?" I acknowledged the soft impeachment. "Pusson sick too much; pusson live for die. You fit for come?" "Fit," said I. "Suppose you come, you no fit to talk?" said he. "No fit," said I, with a shrewd notion it was one of my Portuguese friends who was ill and who did not want a blazing blister on, a thing that was inevitable if you called in the local regular white medical man, so, picking up a medicine-case, I went out into the darkness with my darker friend. After getting outside the closed ground he led the way towards the forest, and I thought it was some one sick at the Roman Catholic mission. On we went down the path that might go there; but when we got to where you turn off for it, he took no heed, but kept on, and then away up over a low hill and down into deeper forest still, I steering by his white cloth. But Africa is an alarming place to walk about in at night, both for a witch doctor who believes in all his local forest devils, and a lady who believes in all the local material ones, so we both got a good deal chipped and frayed and frightened one way and another; but nothing worse happened than our walking up against a python, which had thoughtfully festooned himself across the path, out of the way of ground ants, to sleep off a heavy meal. My eminent friend, in the inky darkness and his hurry to reach his patient, failed to see this, and went fair up against it. I, being close behind, did ditto.

Then my leader ducked under the excited festoon and went down the path at headlong speed, with me after him, alike terrified at losing sight of his guiding cloth and at the python, whom we heard going away into the bush with that peculiar-sounding crackle a big snake gives when he is badly hurried.

Finally we reached a small bush village, and on the ground before one of the huts was the patient extended, surrounded by unavailing, wailing women. He was suffering from a disease common in West Africa, but amenable to treatment by European drugs, which I gave to the medical man, who gave them to his patient with proper incantations and a few little things of his own that apparently did not hinder their action. As soon as the patient had got relief, my friend saw me home, and when we got in, I said, Why did you do this, that and the other, as is usual with me, and he sat down, looked far away, and talked for an hour, softly, wordily and gently; and the gist of what that man talked was Goethe's *Prometheus*. I recognised it after half an hour, and when he had done, said, "You got that stuff from a white man." "No, sir," he said, "that no be white man fash, that be country fash, white man no fit to savee our fash." "Aren't they, my friend?" I said; and we parted for the night, I the wiser for it, he the richer.

Now, I pray you, do not think I am saying that there is a "wisdom religion" in Fetish, or anything like that, or that Fetish priests are Spinozas and Goethes—far from it. All that it seems to me to be is a perfectly natural view of Nature, and one that, if you take it up with no higher form of mind in you than a shrewd, logical one alone, will, if you carry it out, lead you necessarily to paint a white chalk rim round one eye, eat your captive, use Woka incantations for diseases, and dance and howl all night repeatedly, to the awe of your fellow-believers, and the scandal of Mohammedan gentlemen who have a revealed religion.

Moreover, the mind-form which gets hold of this truth that is in all things, makes a great difference in the form in which the religion works out. For instance, to

a superficial observer, it would hardly seem possible that a Persian and a Mahdist were followers of the same religion, or that a Spaniard and an English Broad Churchman were so. And yet it seems to me that it is only this class of difference that exists between the African, the Brahmanist, and the Shintoist.

Another and more fundamental point to be considered is the influence of physical environment on religions, particularly these Nature religions.

The Semitic mind, which had never been kept quite in its proper place by natural difficulties, gave to man in the scheme of Creation a pre-eminence that deeply influences Europeans, who have likewise not been kept in their place owing to the environments of the temperate zone. On the other hand, the African race has had about the worst set of conditions possible to bring out the higher powers of man. He has been surrounded by a set of terrific natural phenomena, combined with a good food supply and a warm and equable climate. These things are not enough in themselves to account for his low-culture condition, but they are factors that must be considered. Then, undoubtedly, the nature of the African's mind is one of the most important points. It may seem a paradox to say of people who are always seeing visions that they are not visionaries; but they are not.

The more you know the African, the more you study his laws and institutions, the more you must recognise that the main characteristic of his intellect is logical, and you see how in all things he uses this absolutely sound but narrow thought-form. He is not a dreamer, nor a doubter; everything is real, very real, horribly real to him. It is impossible for me to describe it clearly, but the quality of the African mind is strangely uniform. This may seem strange to those who read accounts of wild and awful ceremonials, or of the African's terror at white man's things; but I believe you will find all people experienced in dealing with uncultured Africans will tell you that this alarm and brief wave of curiosity is merely external, for the African

knows the moment he has time to think it over, what that white man's thing really is, namely, either a white man's Ju Ju or a devil.

It is this power of being able logically to account for everything that is, I believe, at the back of the tremendous permanency of Fetish in Africa, and the cause of many of the relapses into it by Africans converted to other religions; it is also the explanation of the fact that white men who live in districts where death and danger are everyday affairs, under a grim pall of boredom, are liable to believe in Fetish, though ashamed of so doing. For the African, whose mind has been soaked in Fetish during his early and most impressionable years, the voice of Fetish is almost irresistible when affliction comes on him. Sudden dangers or terror he can face with his new religion, because he is not quick at thinking. But give him time to think when under the hand of adversity, and the old explanation that answered it all comes back. I know no more distressing thing than to see an African convert brought face to face with that awful thing we are used to, the problem of an omnipotent God and a suffering world. This does not worry the African convert until it hits him personally in grief and misery. When it does, and he turns and calls upon the God he has been taught will listen, pity and answer, his use of what the scoffers at the converted African call "catch phrases" is horribly heartrending to me, for I know how real, terribly real, the whole thing is to him, and I therefore see the temptation to return to those old gods—gods from whom he never expected pity, presided over by a god that does not care. All that he had to do with them was not to irritate them, to propitiate them, to buy their services when wanted, and, above all, to dodge and avoid them, while he fought it out and managed devils at large. Risky work, but a man is as good as a devil any day if he only takes proper care; and even if any devil should get him unaware—kill him bodily—he has the satisfaction of knowing he will have the power to make it warm for that devil when they meet on the other side.

There is something alluring in this, I think, to any make of human mind, but particularly so to the logical, intensely human one possessed by the West African. Therefore, when wearied and worn out by confronting things that he cannot reconcile, and disappointed by unanswered prayers, he turns back to his old belief entirely, or modifies the religion he has been taught until it fits in with Fetish, and is gradually absorbed by it.

It is often asked whether Christianity or Mohammedanism is to possess Africa—as if the choice of Fate lay between these two things alone. I do not think it is so, at least it is not wise for a mere student to ignore the other thing in the affair, Fetish, which is as it were a sea wherein all things suffer a sea change. For remember it is not Christianity alone that becomes tinged with Fetish, or gets engulfed and dominated by it. Islam, when it strikes the true heart of Africa, the great Forest Belt region, fares little better though it is more recent than Christianity, and though it is preached by men who know the make of the African mind. Islam is in its bluth-period now in all the open parts, even on the desert regions of Africa from its Mediterranean shore to below the Equator, but so far it has beaten up against the Forest Belt like a sea on a sand beach. It has crossed the Forest Belt by the Lakes, it has penetrated it in channels, but in those channels the waters of Islam are, recent as their inroad there is, brackish.

Therefore I make no pretence at prophesying which of these great revealed religions will ultimately possess Africa; but it is an interesting point to notice what has been the reason of the great power of immediate appeal to the African which they both possess.

The African has a great over-God, and below him lesser spirits, including man; but the African has not in West Africa, nor so far as I have been able to ascertain elsewhere in the whole Continent, a God-man, a thing that directly connects man with the great over-God. This thing appeals to the African when it is presented to him by Christianity and Islam.

It is, I am quite aware, not doctrinally true to say

that Islam offers him a God-man; nevertheless in Mohammed practically it does so, and that too in a more easily believable form—by easily I do not mean that it is necessarily true. Moreover it minimises the danger of death in a more definite way, more in keeping with his own desires, and it is more reconcilable with his conscience in the treatment of life as he has to live it. Most of the higher class Africans are traders. Islam gives an easier, clearer line of rectitude to a trader than its great rival in Africa—under African conditions.

There are many who will question whether conscience is a sufficiently large factor in an African mind for us to think of taking it into account, but whether you call it conscience, or religious bent, or fear, the factor is a large one. An African cannot say, as so many Europeans evidently easily can, "Oh, that is all right from a religious point of view, but one must be practical, you know;" and it is this factor that makes me respect the African deeply and sympathise with him, for I have this same unmanageable hindersome thing in my own mind, which you can call anything you like; I myself call it honour. Now conscience when conditioned by Christianity is an exceedingly difficult thing for a trader to manage satisfactorily to himself. A mass of compromises have to be made with the world, and a man who is always making compromises gets either sick of them or sick of the thing that keeps on nagging at him about them, or he becomes merely gaseous-minded all round. There are some few in all races of men who can think comfortably

> "That conscience, like a restive horse,
> Will stumble if you check his course,
> But ride him with an easy rein,
> And rub him down with worldly gain,
> He'll carry you through thick and thin,
> Safe, although dirty, 'till you win,"

but such men are in Africa a very small minority, and so it falls out that most men engaged in trade revert to Fetish, or become lax as Church members, or embrace Islam.

I think, if you will consider the case, you will see that the workability of Islam is one of the chief reasons of its success in Africa. It is, from many African points of view, a most inconvenient religion, with its Rahmadhizan, bound every now and again to come in the height of the dry season; its restrictions on alcoholic drinks and gambling; but, on the whole it is satisfying to the African conscience. Moreover, like Christianity, it lifts man into a position of paramount importance in Creation. He is the thing God made the rest for. I have often heard Africans say, "It does a man good to know God loves him; it makes him proud too much." Well, at any rate it is pleasanter than Fetish, where man, in company with a host of spirits, is fighting for his own hand, in an arena before the gods, eternally.

We will now turn to the consideration of the status of the human soul in pure Fetish, that is to say in Fetish that is common to all the different schools of West African Fetishism.

What strikes a European when studying it is the lack of gaps between things. To the African there is perhaps no gap between the conception of spirit and matter, animate or inanimate. It is all an affair of grade—not of essential difference in essence. At the head of existence are those beings who can work without using matter, either as a constant associate or as an occasional tool—do it all themselves, as an African would say. Beneath this grade there are many grades of spirits, who occasionally or habitually, as in the case of the human grade, are associated with matter, and at the lower end of the scale is what we call matter, but which I believe the West African regards as the same sort of stuff as the rest, only very low—so low that practically it doesn't matter; but it is spirits, the things that cause all motion, all difficulties, dangers and calamities, that do matter and must be thought about, for they are *real* things whether "they live for thing" or no.

The African and myself are also in a fine fog about form, but I will spare you that point, for where that thing

comes from, often so quickly and silently, and goes, often so quickly and silently, too, under our eyes, everlastingly, that thing on which we all so much depend at every moment of our lives, that thing we are quite as conscious of as light and darkness, heat or cold, yet which makes a thing no heavier in one shape than in another—is altogether too large a subject to touch on now. Yet, remember it is a most important part of practical Fetish, for on it depends divination and heaps of such like matters, that are parts of both the witch doctor and the Fetish priest's daily work.

One of the fundamental doctrines of Fetish is that the connection of a certain spirit with a certain mass of matter, a material object, is not permanent; the African will point out to you a lightning-stricken tree and tell you that its spirit has been killed; he will tell you when the cooking pot has gone to bits that it has lost its spirit; if his weapon fails it is because some one has stolen or made sick its spirit by means of witchcraft. In every action of his daily life he shows you how he lives with a great, powerful spirit world around him. You will see him before starting out to hunt or fight rubbing medicine into his weapons to strengthen the spirits within them, talking to them the while; telling them what care he has taken of them, reminding them of the gifts he has given them, though those gifts were hard for him to give, and begging them in the hour of his dire necessity not to fail him. You will see him bending over the face of a river talking to its spirit with proper incantations, asking it when it meets a man who is an enemy of his to upset his canoe, or drown him, or asking it to carry down with it some curse to the village below which has angered him, and in a thousand other ways he shows you what he believes if you will watch him patiently.

It is a very important point in the study of pure Fetish to gain a clear conception of this arrangement of things in grades. As far as I have gone I think I may say fourteen classes of spirits exist in Fetish. Dr. Nassau of Gaboon thinks that the spirits commonly

affecting human affairs can be classified fairly completely into six classes.[1]

Regarding the Fetish view of the state and condition of the human soul there are certain ideas that I think I may safely say are common to the various cults of Fetish, both Negro and Bantu, in Western Africa. Firstly, the class of spirits that are human souls always remain human souls. They do not become deified, nor do they sink in grade. I am aware that here I am on dangerous ground, so I am speaking carefully.[2] An eminent authority, when criticising my statements,[3] dwelt upon their heterodoxy on this point, saying, however, "We may throw out the conjecture that in remote and obscure West Africa men do not reach the necessary pitch of renown for mighty deeds or sanctity that qualifies them in larger countries for elevation after death to high places among recognised divinities."

This conjecture I quite accept as an explanation of the non-deification of human beings in West Africa, and I think, taken in conjunction with the grade conception, it fairly explains why West Africa has not what undoubtedly other regions of the world have in their religions, deified ancestors.

After having had my attention drawn to the strangeness of this non-deification of ancestors, I did my best to work the subject out in order to see if by any chance I had badly observed it. I consulted the accounts of West African religions given by Labat, Bosman, Bastian and Ellis, and to my great pleasure found that the three first said nothing against my statements, and that Sir A. B. Ellis had himself said the same thing in his *Ewe Speaking People*. Moreover, I sent a circular written on this point to people in West Africa whom I knew had opportunities of knowing the facts as at present existing, —the answers were unanimous with Ellis and myself.

[1] See *Travels in West Africa*, by M. H. Kingsley. Macmillan & Co. 1897.

[2] For further details see *Travels in West Africa*, p. 444.

[3] "Origins and Interpretations of Primitive Religions." *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1897, p. 219.

Nevertheless, mind, you will find something that looks like worship of ancestors in West Africa. Only it is no more worship, properly so called, than our own deference to our living, elderly, and influential relations.

In almost all Western African districts (it naturally does not show clearly in those where reincarnation is believed to be the common and immediate lot of all human spirits) is a class of spirits called "the well disposed ones," and this class is clearly differentiated from "them," the generic name used for non-human spirits. These "well disposed ones" are ancestors, and they do what they can to benefit their particular village or family, acting in conjunction with the village or family Fetish, who is not a human spirit, nor an ancestor. But the things given to ancestors are gifts, not in the proper sense of the word sacrifices, for the well disposed ones are not gods even of the rank of a Sasabonsum or an Ombuiri.

In an extremely interesting answer to my inquiries that I received from Mr. J. H. Batty, of Cape Coast, who had kindly submitted my questions to a native gentleman well versed in affairs, the statement regarding ancestors is, "The people believe that the spirits of their departed relations exercise a guardian care over them, and they will frequently stand over the graves of their deceased friends and invoke their spirits to protect them and their children from harm. It is imagined that the spirit lingers about the house some time after death. If the children are ill the illness is ascribed to the spirit of the deceased mother having embraced them. Elderly women are often heard to offer up a kind of prayer to the spirit of a departed parent, begging it either to go to its rest, or to protect the family by keeping off evil spirits, instead of injuring the children or other members of the family by its touch. The ghosts of departed enemies are considered by the people as bad spirits, who have power to injure them."

In connection with this fear of the ancestor's ghost hurting members of its own family, particularly children, I may remark it has several times been carefully explained to me that this "touching" comes not from

malevolence, but from loneliness and the desire to have their company. A sentimental but inconvenient desire that the living human cannot give in to perpetually, though big men will accede to their ancestors' desire for society by killing off people who may serve or cheer him. This desire for companionship is, of course, immensely greater in the spirit that is not definitely settled in the society of spiritdom, and it is therefore more dangerous to its own belongings, in fact to all living society, while it is hanging about the other side of the grave, but this side of Hades. Thus I well remember a delicious row that arose primarily out of trade matters, but which caused one family to yell at another family divers remarks, ending up with the accusation, "You good-for-nothing illegitimate offspring of house lizards, you don't bury your ditto ditto dead relations, but leave them knocking about anyhow, a curse to Calabar." Naturally therefore the spirit of a dead enemy is feared because it would touch for the purpose of getting spirit slaves; therefore it follows that powerful ancestors are valued when they are on the other side, for they can keep off the dead enemies. A great chief's spirit is a thoroughly useful thing for a village to keep going, and in good order, for it conquered those who are among the dead with it, and can keep them under, keep them from aiding their people in the fights between its living relations and itself and them, with its slave spirit army. I ought to say that it is customary for the living to send the dead out ahead of the army, to bear the brunt in the first attack.

Ancestor-esteem you will find at its highest pitch in West Africa under the school of Fetish that rules the Tshi and Ewe peoples. Ellis gives you a full description of it for Ashantee and Dahomey.[1] The next district going down coast is the Yoruba one; but Yoruba has been so long under the influence of Mohammedanism that its Fetish, judging from Ellis's statement in his *Yoruba Speaking People*, is deeply tinged with it. I have no

[1] *The Tshi Speaking, Ewe Speaking and Yoruba Speaking Peoples of the West Coast of Africa.*—A. B. Ellis.

personal acquaintance with Yorubaland, but have no hesitation for myself in accepting his statements from the accuracy I have found them, by personal experience with Tshi and Ewe people, to possess. Below Yoruba comes a district, the Oil Rivers, where, alas, Ellis did not penetrate, and where no ethnologist, unless you will graciously extend the term to me, has ever cautiously worked.

In this district you have a school where reincarnation is strongly believed in, a different school of Fetish to that of Tshi and Ewe, a class of human ghosts called the well-disposed ones. And these are ancestors undoubtedly. They do not show up clearly in those districts where reincarnation is believed to be the common lot of all human souls. Nevertheless, they are clear enough even there, as I will presently attempt to explain.

These ancestor spirits have things given to them for their consolation and support, and in return they do what they can to benefit and guard their own villages and families. Nevertheless, the things given to the well-disposed ones are not as things sacrificed to gods. Nor are the well-disposed ones gods, even of the grade of a Sasabonsum or an Ombuiri. It is a low down thing to dig up your father—i.e., open his grave and take away the things in it that have been given him. It will get you cut by respectable people, and rude people when there is a market-place row on will mention it freely ; but it won't bring on a devastating outbreak of small-pox in the whole district.

CHAPTER VI

SCHOOLS OF FETISH

Wherein the student, thinking things may be made clearer if it be perceived that there are divers schools of Fetish, discourses on the schools of West African religious thought.

As I have had occasion to refer to schools of Fetish, and as that is a term of my own, I must explain why I use it, and what I mean by it, in so far as I am able. When travelling from district to district you cannot fail to be struck by the difference in character of the native religion you are studying. My own range on the West Coast is from Sierra Leone to Loanda; and here and there in places such as the Oil Rivers, the Ogowé, and the Lower Congo, I have gone inland into the heart of what I knew to be particularly rich districts for an ethnologist. I make no pretence to a thorough knowledge of African Fetish in all its schools, but I feel sure no wandering student of the subject in Western Africa can avoid recognising the existence of at least four distinct forms of development of the Fetish idea. They have, every one of them, the underlying idea I have attempted to sketch as pure Fetish when speaking of the position of the human soul; and yet they differ. And I believe much of the confusion which is supposed to exist in African religious ideas is a confusion only existing in the minds of cabinet ethnologists from a want of recognition of the fact of the existence of these schools.

For example, suppose you take a few facts from Ellis and a few from Bastian and mix, and call the mixture West African religion, you do much the same sort of thing as if you took bits from Mr. Spurgeon's works, and from those of some eminent Jesuit and of a sound Greek churchman, and mixed them and labelled it European religion. The bits would be all right in themselves, but the mixture would be a quaint affair.

As far as my present knowledge of the matter goes, I should state that there were four main schools of West African Fetish: (1) the Tshi and Ewe school, Ellis's school; (2) the Calabar school; (3) the Mpongwe school; (4) Nkissism or the Fjort school. Subdivisions of these schools can easily be made, but I only make the divisions of the different main objects of worship, or more properly speaking, the thing each school especially endeavours to secure for man. The Tshi and Ewe school is mainly concerned with the preservation of life; the Calabar school with attempting to enable the soul successfully to pass through death; the Mpongwe school with the attainment of material prosperity; while the school of Nkissi is mainly concerned with the worship of the mystery of the power of Earth—Nkissinsi. You will find these divers things worshipped, or, rather, I would say cultivated, in all the schools of Fetish, but in certain schools certain ideas are predominant. Look at Srahmantin of the Tshi people and at Nzambi of the Fjort. Both these ladies know where the animals go to drink, what they say to each other, where their towns are, and what not; also they both know what the forest says to the wind and the rain, and all the forest's own small talk in the bargain, and, therefore, also the inner nature of all these things; and both I have heard, like other ladies, prefer gentlemen's society. Women they have a tendency to be hard on, but either Srahmantin or Nzambi think nothing of taking up a man's time, making him neglect his business or his family affairs, or both together, by keeping him in the bush for a month or so at a time, teaching

(*To face page* 116.

FANTEE NATIVES OF THE GOLD COAST.

him things about medicines, and finally sending him back into town in so addlepated a condition that for months he hardly knows who he exactly is. When he comes round, however, if he has any sense, he sets up in business as a medical man; sometimes, however, he just remains merely cracky. Such a man was my esteemed Kefalla.

But look how different under different schools is the position of Srahmantin and Nzambi. Srahmantin is only propitiated by doctors and hunters; by all respectable, busy, family men forced to go through forests, she is simply dreaded, while Nzambi, the great Princess, entirely dominates the whole school of Nkissism.

From what cause or what series of causes the predominance of these different things has come, I do not know, unless it be from different natural environment and different race. It is certainly not a mere tribal affair, for there are many different tribes under each school. For example, I do not think you need make more than a subdivision between the Tshi, the Ga or Ogi and the Ewe peoples' Fetish, nor more than a subdivision between those of the Eboes and the Ibbibios, or those of the Fjort and Mussurongoes; but we want more information before it would be quite safe to dogmatise.

It is impossible in the present state of our knowledge to give exact geographical limits to the different schools of Fetish, and I therefore only sketch their geographical distribution in Western Africa, from Sierra Leone to Loanda, hoping thereby to incite further research.

Sierra Leone and its adjacent districts have not been studied by an ethnologist. We have only scattered information regarding the religion there; and unfortunately the observations we have on it mainly bear on the operations of the secret societies, which in these regions have attained to much power, and are usually, though erroneously, grouped under the name of Poorah. Poorah, like all secret societies, is intensely interesting, for it is the manifestation of the law form of Fetish; but secret societies are pure Fetish, and common to all districts. All that we can gather from the scattered observations

on the rest of the Fetish in this region is that it is allied to the Fetish school of the Tshi speaking people.

Next to this unobserved district, we come to the well-observed districts of the Tshi, Ewe, and Yoruba speaking people—Ellis's region.

It may seem unwise for me to attempt to group these three together and call them one school, because from this one district we have two distinct cults of Fetish in the West Indies, Voudou and Obeah (Tchanga and Wanga). Voudou itself is divided into two sects, the white and the red—the first, a comparatively harmless one, requiring only the sacrifice of, at the most, a white cock or a white goat, whereas the red cult only uses the human sacrifice—the goat without horns. Obeah, on the other hand, kills only by poison—does not show the blood at all. And there is another important difference between Voudou and Obeah, and that is that Voudou requires for the celebration of its rites a priestess and a priest. Obeah can be worked by either alone, and is not tied to the presence of the snake. Both these cults have sprung from slaves imported from Ellis's district, Obeah from slaves bought at Koromantin mainly, and Voudou from those bought at Dahomey. Nevertheless, it seems to me these good people have differentiated their religion in the West Indies considerably: for example, in Obeah the spider (*anansi*) has a position given it equal to that of the snake in Voudou. Now the spider is all very well in West Africa; round him there has grown a series of most amusing stories, always to be told through the nose, and while you crawl about; but to put him on a plane with the snake in Dahomey is absurd; his equivalent there is the turtle, also a focus for many tales, only more improper tales, and not half so amusing.

The true importance and status of the snake in Dahomey is a thing hard to fix. Personally I believe it to be merely a case of especial development of a local Ju Ju. We all know what the snake signifies, and instances of its attaining a local eminence occur elsewhere. At Creek Town, in Calabar, and Brass River it is more

(To face page 116

YORUBA.

than respected. It is an accidental result of some bit of history we have lost, like the worship of the crocodile at Dixcove and in the Lower Congo. Whereas it is clear that the general respect, amounting to seeming worship, of the leopard is another affair altogether, for the leopard is the great thing in all West African forests, and forests and surf are the great things in Western Africa—the lines of perpetual danger to the life of man.

But there is a remarkable point that you cannot fail to notice in the Fetish of these three divisions of true Negro Fetish studied by Ellis, namely, that what is one god in Yoruba you get as several gods exercising one particular function in Dahomey, as hundreds of gods on the Gold Coast. Moreover, all these gods in all these districts have regular priests and priestesses in dozens, while below Yoruba regular priests and priestesses are rare. There the officials of the law societies abound, and there are Fetish men, but these are different people to the priests of Bohorwissi and Tando.

I do not know Yoruba land personally, but have had many opportunities of inquiring regarding its Fetish from educated and uneducated natives of that country whom I have met down Coast as traders and artisans. Therefore, having found nothing to militate against Ellis's statements, I accept them for Yoruba as for Dahomey and the Gold Coast; and my great regret is that his careful researches did not extend down into the district below Yoruba—the district I class under the Calabar school—more particularly so because the districts he worked at are all districts where there has been a great and long-continued infusion of both European and Mohammedan forms of thought, owing to the four-hundred-year-old European intercourse on the seaboard, and the even older and greater Mohammedan influence from the Western Soudan; whereas below these districts you come to a region of pure Negro Fetish that has undergone but little infusion of alien thought.

Whether or no to place Benin with Yoruba or with Calabar is a problem. There is, no doubt, a very close connection between it and Yoruba. There is also no

doubt that Benin was in touch, even as late as the seventeenth century, with some kingdom of the higher culture away in the interior. It may have been Abyssinia, or it may have been one of the cultured states that the chaos produced by the Mohammedan invasion of the Soudan destroyed. In our present state of knowledge we can only conjecture, I venture to think, idly, until we know more. The only thing that is certain is that Benin was influenced as is shown by its art development. Benin practically broke up long before Ashantee or Dahomey, for, as Proyart[1] remarks, "many small kingdoms or native states which at the present day share Africa among them were originally provinces dependant on other kingdoms, the particular governors of which usurped the sovereignty." Benin's north-western provinces seem to have done this, possibly with the assistance of the Mohammedanised people who came down to the seaboard seeking the advantages of white trade; and Benin became isolated in its forest swamps, cut off from the stimulating influence of successful wars, and out of touch with the expanding influence of commerce, and devoted its attention too much to Fetish matters to be healthy for itself or any one who fell in with it. It is an interesting point in this connection to observe that we do not find in the accounts given by the earlier voyagers to Benin city anything like the enormous sacrifice of human life described by visitors to it of our own time. Other districts round Calabar, Bonny, Opobo, and so on, have human sacrifice as well, but they show no signs of being under Benin in trade matters, in which Benin used to be very strict when it had the chance. In fact, whatever respect they had for Benin was a sentimental one, such as the King of Kongo has, and does not take the practical form of paying taxes.

The extent of the direct influence of Benin away into the forest belt to the east and south I do not think at any time was great. Benin was respected because it was regarded as possessing a big Fetish and great riches.

[1] *History of Loango*, by the Abbé Proyart, 1776. Pinkerton vol. xvi. p. 587.

In recent years it was regarded by people discontented with white men as their great hope, from its power to resist these being greater than their own. Nevertheless, the adjacent kingdom of Owarie (Warri), even in the sixteenth century, was an independent kingdom. So different was its Fetish from that of Benin that Warri had not then, and has not to this day, human sacrifice in its religious observances, only judicial and funeral killings.

Considering how very easily Africans superficially adopt the religious ideas of alien people with whom they have commercial intercourse, we must presume that the people who imported the art of working in metals into Benin also imported some of their religion. The relics of religion, alien to Fetish, that show in Benin Fetish are undoubtedly Christian. Whether these relics are entirely those of the Portuguese Roman Catholic missions, or are not also relics of some earlier Christian intercourse with Western Soudan Christianised states existing prior to the Mohammedan invasion of Northern Africa, is again a matter on which we require more information. But just as I believe some of the metal articles found in Benin to be things made in Birmingham, some to be old Portuguese, some to be native castings, copies of things imported from that unknown inland state, and some to be the original inland state articles themselves, so do I believe the relics of Christianity in the Fetish to be varied in origin, all alike suffering absorption by the native Fetish.

There is no doubt that up to the last twenty years the three great Fetish kings in Western Africa were those of Ashantee, Dahomey, and Benin. Each of these kings was alike believed by the whole of the people to have great Fetish power in his own locality. In the time of which we have no historical record—prior to the visits of the first white voyagers in the fifteenth century—there is traditional record of the King of Benin fighting with his cousin of Dahomey. Possibly Dahomey beat him badly; anyhow something went seriously wrong with Benin as a territorial kingdom, before its discovery by modern Europe.

I now turn to the Fetish of the Oil Rivers which I have called the Calabar school. The predominance there of the belief in reincarnation seems to me sufficient to separate it from the Gold Coast and Dahomey Fetish. Funeral customs, important in all Negro Fetish, become in the Calabar school exceedingly so. A certain amount of care anywhere is necessary to successfully establish the human soul after death, for the human soul strongly objects to leaving material pleasures and associations and going to, at best, an uninteresting under-world; but when you have not only got to send the soul down, but to bring it back into the human form again, and not any human form at that, but one of its own social status and family, the thing becomes more complicated still; and to do it so engrosses human attention, and so absorbs human wealth, that you do not find under the Calabar school a multitude of priest-served gods as you do in Dahomey and on the Gold Coast. Mind you, so far as I could make out while in the Calabar districts myself, the equivalents of those same gods were quite believed in; but they were neglected in a way that would have caused them in Dahomey, where they have been taught to fancy themselves, to wreck the place. Not only is care taken to send a soul down, but means are taken to see whether or no it has duly returned; for keeping a valuable soul, like that of a great Fetish proficient who could manage outside spirits, or that of a good trader, is a matter of vital importance to the prosperity of the Houses, so when such a soul has left the House in consequence of some sad accident or another, or some vile witchcraft, the babies that arrive at the House are closely watched. Assortments of articles belonging to deceased members of the house are presented to it, and then, according to the one it picks out, it is decided who that baby really is—"See, Uncle so-and-so knows his own pipe," &c.—and I have often heard a mother reproaching a child for some fault say, "Oh, we made a big mistake when we thought you were so-and-so." I must say I think the absence of the idea of the deification of ancestors in West Africa shows up particularly

A Calabar Chief [*To face p.* 222.

strongly in the Calabar school, for herein you see so clearly that the dead do not pass into a higher, happier state —that the soul separate from the body is only a part of that thing we call a human being; and in West Africa the whole is greater than a part, even in this matter.

The pathos of the thing, when you have grasped the underlying idea, is so deep that the strangeness of it passes away, and you almost forget to hate the horrors of the slaughter that hang round Oil River funeral customs, or, at any rate, you understand the tenacity you meet with here of the right to carry out killing at funerals, a greater tenacity than confronted us in Gold Coast or Dahomey regions, because a different idea is involved in the affair. On the Gold Coast, for example, you can substitute wealth for the actual human victim, because with wealth the dead soul could, after all, make itself comfortable in Srahmandazi, but not so in the Rivers. Without slaves, wives, and funds, how can the dead soul you care for speak with the weight of testimony of men as to its resting place or position? Rolls of velvet or satin, and piles of manillas or doubloons alone cannot speak; besides, they may have been stolen stuff, and the soul you care for may be put down by the authorities as a mere thieving slave, a sort of mere American gold bug trying to pass himself off as a duke —or a descendant of General Washington—which would lead to that soul being disgraced and sent back in a vile form. Think how you yourself, if in comfortable circumstances, belonging to a family possessing wealth and power, would like father, mother, sister, or brother of yours who by this change of death had just left these things, to go down through death, and come back into life in a squalid slum!

We meet in this school, however, with a serious problem—namely, what does become of dead chiefs? It is a point I will not dogmatise on, but it certainly looks as if the Calabar under-world was a most aristocratic spot, peopled entirely by important chiefs and the retinues sent down with them—by no means having the fine mixed society of Srahmandazi.

The Oil River deceased chief is clearly kept as a sort of pensioner. The chief who succeeds him in his headship of the House is given to "making his father" annually. It is not necessarily his real father that he makes, but his predecessor in the headmanship—a slave succeeding to a free man would "make his father" to the dead free man, and so on. This function undoubtedly consists in sending his predecessor a big subsidy for his support, and consolation in the shape of slaves and goods. I may as well own I have long had a dark suspicion regarding this matter—a suspicion as to where those goods went. Their proper destination, of course, should be the under-world. Thither undoubtedly on the Gold Coast they would go; but when sent in the Rivers I do not think they go so far. In fact, to make a clean breast of it, I do not believe big chiefs are properly buried in the Oil Rivers at all. I think they are, for political purposes, kept hanging about outside life, but not inside death, by their diplomatic successors. I feel emboldened to say this by what my friend, Major Leonard, Vice-Consul of the Niger Coast Protectorate, recently told me. When he was appointed Vice-Consul, and was introducing himself to his chiefs in this capacity, one chief he visited went aside to a deserted house, opened the door, and talked to somebody inside; there was not any one in material form inside, only the spirit of his deceased predecessor, and all the things left just as they were when he died; the live chief was telling the dead chief that the new Consul was come, &c.

The reason, that is the excuse, for this seemingly unprincipled conduct in not properly burying the chief, so that he may be reincarnated to a complete human form, lies in the fact that he would be a political nuisance to his successor if he came back promptly; therefore he is kept waiting.

From first-class native informants I have had fragments of accounts of father-making ceremonies. Particularly interesting have been their accounts of what the live chief says to the dead one. Much of it, of

course, is, for diplomatic reasons, not known outside official circles. But the general tone of these communications is well known to be of a nature to discourage the dead chief from returning, and to reconcile him to his existing state. Things are not what they were here. The price of oil is down, women are ten times more frivolous, slaves ten times more trying, white Consul men abound, also their guns are more deadly than of old, this new Consul looks worse than the last, there is nothing but war and worry for a chief nowadays. The whole country is going to the dogs financially and domestically, in fact, and you are much better off where you are. Then come petitions for such help as the ghost chief and his ghost retinue can give.

This, I think, explains why chiefs' funeral customs in the Rivers differ in kind, not merely in grade, from those of big trade boys or other important people, and also accounts for their repetition at intervals. Big trade boys, and the slaves and women sent down with them, return to a full human form more or less promptly; mere low grade slaves, slaves that cannot pull a canoe, *i.e.*, provide a war canoe for the service of the House out of their own private estate, are not buried at all—they are thrown away, unless they have a mother who will bury them. They will come back again all right as slaves, but then that is all they are fit for.

Then we have left very interesting sections of the community to consider from a funeral rite point of view—namely, those in human form who are not, strictly speaking, human beings, and those who, though human, have committed adultery with spirits—women who bear twins or who die in child-birth. These sinners, I may briefly remark, are neither buried nor just thrown away; they are, as far as possible, destroyed. But with the former class the matter is slightly different. Children, for example, that arrive with ready cut teeth, will in a strict family be killed or thrown away in the bush to die as they please; but the feeling against them is not really keen. They may, if the mother chooses to be bothered with them, be reared; but the interesting point

is that any property they may acquire during life has no legal heir whatsoever. It may be dissipated, thrown away. This shows clearly that such individuals are not human, and, moreover, they are not buried nor destroyed at death; they are just thrown away. There is no particular harm in them as there is in the sin-stained twins.

The only class in West Africa I have found that are like these spirit humans is that strange class, the minstrels. I wish I knew more about these people. Were it not that Mr. F. Swanzy possesses material evidence of their existence, in the shape of the most superb song-net, I should hesitate to mention them at all. Some of my French friends, however, tell me they have seen them in Senegal, and I venture to think that region must be their head quarters. I have seen one in Accra, one in Sierra Leone, two on board steamers, and one in Buana town, Cameroon. Briefly, these are minstrels who frequent market towns and for a fee sing stories. Each minstrel has a song-net—a strongly made net of fishing net sort. On to this net are tied all manner and sorts of things, pythons' back bones, tobacco pipes, bits of china, feathers, bits of hide, birds' heads, reptiles' heads, bones, &c., &c., and to every one of these objects hangs a tale. You see your minstrel's net, you select an object and say how much that song. He names an exorbitant price; you haggle; no good. He won't be reasonable, say over the python bone, so you price the tobacco pipe—more haggle; finally you settle on some object and its price, and sit down on your heels and listen with rapt attention to the song, or, rather, chant. You usually have another. You sort of dissipate in novels, in fact. I do not say it's quiet reading, because unprincipled people will come headlong and listen when you have got your minstrel started, without paying their subscription. Hence a row, unless you are, like me, indifferent to other people having a little pleasure.

These song-nets, I may remark, are not of a regulation size. I have never seen on the West Coast anything like so superb a collection of stories as Mr. Swanzy has tied on that song-net of his—Woe is me! without the

(To face page 126.

NATIVES OF GABOON.

translating minstrel, a cycle of dead songs that must have belonged to a West African Shakespeare. The most impressive song-net that I saw was the one at Buana. Its owner I called Homer on the spot, because his works were a terrific two. Tied on to his small net were a human hand and a human jaw bone. They were his only songs. I heard them both regardless of expense. I did not understand them, because I did not know his language; but they were fascinating things, and the human hand one had a passage in it which caused the singer to crawl on his hands and knees, round and round, stealthily looking this side and that, giving the peculiar leopard questing cough, and making the leopard mark on the earth with his doubled-up fist. Ah! that was something like a song! It would have roused a rock to enthusiasm; a civilised audience would have smothered its singer with bouquets. I—well, the headman with me had to interfere and counsel moderation in heads of tobacco.

But what I meant to say about these singers was only this. They are not buried as other people are; they are put into trees when they are dead—may be because they are "all same for one" with those singers the birds. I do not know, I only hope Homer is still extant, and that some more intelligent hearer than I will meet with him.

The southern boundary of the Calabar school of Fetish lies in narrower regions than the boundary between it and Ellis's school in the north. I venture to think that this may in a measure arise from there being in the southern region the additional element of difference of race. For immediately below Calabar in the Cameroon territory the true Negro meets the Bantu. In Cameroon in the tribes of the Dualla stem we have a people speaking a Bantu language, and having a Bantu culture, yet nevertheless having a great infusion of pure Negro blood, and largely under the dominion of the true Negro thought form.

I own that of all the schools of Fetish that I know, the Calabar school is the one that fascinates me most. I like it better than Ellis's school, wherein the fate of

the soul after death is a life in a shadow land, with shadows for friends, lovers, and kinsfolk, with the shadows of joys for pleasures, the shadows of quarrels for hate—a thing that at its best is inferior to the wretchedest full-life on earth. Yet this settled shadow-land of Srahmandazi or Gboohiadse is a better thing than the homeless drifting state of the soul in the school below Calabar—namely, the school I have ventured to term the Mpongwe school. To the brief consideration of this school we will now turn.

In between the strongly-marked Calabar school and the strongly-marked school of Nkissism of Loango Kacongo, and Bas Congo there exists a school plainly differing from both. This region is interesting for many reasons, chief amongst which is that it is the sea-board region of the great African Forest belt. Tribe after tribe come down into it, flourish awhile, and die, uninfluenced by Mohammedan or European culture. The Mohammedans in Africa as aforesaid have never mastered the western region of the forest belt; and the Europeans have never, in this region between Cameroon and Loango, established themselves in force. It is undoubtedly the wildest bit of West Africa.

The dominant tribes here have, for as far back as we can get evidence—some short four hundred years—been tribes of the Mpongwe stem—the so-called noble tribes. To-day they are dying—going off the face of the earth, leaving behind them nothing to bear testimony in this world to their great ability, save the most marvellously beautiful language, the Greek of Africa, as Dr. Nassau calls it, and the impress of their more elaborate thought-form on the minds of the bush tribes that come into contact with them. Their last pupils are the great Bafangh, now supplanting them in the regions of the Bight of Panavia.

From their influence I think the school of Fetish of this region is perhaps best called the Mpongwe school, though I do not altogether like the term, because I believe the Mpongwe stem to be in origin pure Negro, and the Fetish school they have elaborated and co-

ordinated is Bantu in thought-form, just as the language they have raised to so high a pitch of existence is in itself a Bantu language. Yet the Mpongwe are rulers of both these things, and they will thereby leave imprinted on the minds of their supplanters in the land the mark of their intelligence.

I have said the predominant idea in this Mpongwe school is the securing of material prosperity. That is to say this is the part of pure Fetish that receives more attention than other parts of pure Fetish in this school; but it attains to no such definite predominance as funeral rites do in the Calabar school, or the preservation of life in Ellis's school. One might, however, quite fairly call the Mpongwe school the trade-charm school, great as trade charms are in all West African Fetish.

This lack of a predominance sufficient to dwarf other parts of pure Fetish makes the Mpongwe school particularly interesting and valuable to a student; it is a magnificent school to study your pure Fetish in, as none of it is here thrown by a predominant factor into the background of thought, and left in a neglected state.

It is of this school that you will find Dr. Nassau's classification of spirits, and all the other observations of his that I have quoted of things absolutely believed in by the natives, and also all the Mpongwe, Benga, Igalwa, Ncomi, and Fetish I have attempted to describe.[1]

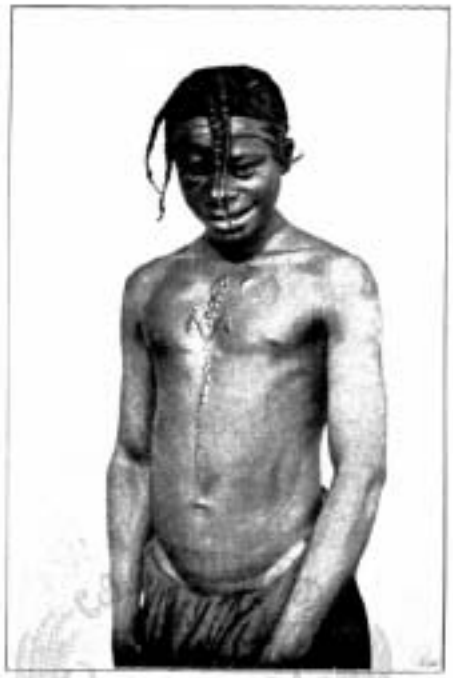
It has no gods with proper priests. Human beings are here just doing their best to hold their own with the spirit world, getting spirits under their control as far as possible, and dealing with the rest of them diplomatically. This state I venture to think is Fetish in a very early form, a form through which the now elaborate true Negro Fetish must have passed before reaching its present co-ordinated state. How long ago it was when the true Negro was in this stage I will not venture to conjecture. Sir Henry Maine, of whom I am a very humble follower, says, "Nothing moves that is

[1] *Travels in West Africa.* Fetish Chapters.

not Greek." This is a hard saying to accept, but the truth of it grows on you when you are studying things such as these, and you are forced to acknowledge that they at any rate have a slow rate of development—sometimes indeed it seems that there is a mere wave motion of thought among all men rising here and there when in the hands of superior tribes, like the Mpongwe for example, to a wave crest destined on their extinction to fall again. Now and again as a storm on the sea, the impulse of a revealed religion sweeps down on to this ocean of nature philosophy, elevates it or confuses it according to the initial profundity of it. If you have ever seen the difference between a deep sea storm and an esturial storm, you will know what I mean. Yet this has nothing to do with the truth or falsity of the Fetish thought-form, but merely has a bearing on the quality of the minds that deal with it, as it must on all minds not under the influence of a revealed religion; and I now turn, in conclusion of this brief consideration of the schools of Fetish in West Africa, to the next school to the Mpongwe, namely, the school of Nkissism. I need not go into details concerning it here; you have them at your command in the two great works of Bastian, *An Expedition under Loango Küste und Besuch in San Salvador*, and in Mr. R. E. Dennett's *Folk Lore of the Fjorts*, published by the liberality of the Folk Lore Society, and also his former book, *Seven Years among the Fjorts*.[1]

The predominant feature in this school is undoubtedly the extra recognition given to the mystery of the power of the earth, Nkissi 'nsi. Here you find the earth goddess Nzambi the paramount feature in the Fetish; from her the Fetish priests have their knowledge of the proper way to manage and communicate with lower earth spirits, round her circle almost all the legends, in her lies the ultimate human hope of help and protection. Nzambi is too large a subject for us to enter into here. She is the great mother, but she is not absolute in power. She is not one of the forms of the great unheeding over-

[1] Sampson Low and Co.



[*To face p.* 130.

FJORT NATIVES OF KACONGO AND LOANGO.

lord of gods, like Nyankupong, or Abassi-boom; the equivalent to him, is her husband Nzambi Mpungu, among the followers of Nkissism; but the predominance given in this school to the great Princess Nzambi has had two effects that must be borne in mind in studying the region from Loango to the south bank of Congo. Firstly, it apparently led to Nzambi being confused by the natives with the Holy Virgin, when they were under the tuition of the Romam Catholic missionaries during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; hence Nzambi's cult requires to be studied with the greatest care at the present day. Secondly, partly in consequence of the native predominance given to her, and partly in the predominance she has gained from the aforesaid confusion, women have a very singular position, a superior one to that which they have in other schools; this you will see by reading the stories collected by Mr. Dennett. I will speak no further now concerning these schools of Fetish, for Nkissism is the most southern of the West African schools, its domain extending over the whole of the regions once forming the kingdom of Kongo down to Angola. Below Angola, on the West Coast, you come to the fringing zone of the Kalahi desert, and to those interesting people the Bushmen, of whose religion I am unable, with any personal experience, to speak. Below them you strike South Africa. South Africa is South Africa; West Africa is West Africa. Of the former I know nothing, of the latter, alas! only a tenth part of what I should wish to know, so I return to pure Fetish and to its bearing on witchcraft.

CHAPTER VII

FETISH AND WITCHCRAFT

Wherein the student having by now got rather involved in things in general, is constrained to discourse on witchcraft and its position in West African religious thought, concluding with the conviction that Fetish is quite clear, though the student has not succeeded in making it so.

NOW, here we come to a very interesting question: What is witchcraft in itself? Conversing freely with the Devil, says Christendom, firmly; and taking the Devil to mean the Spirit of Evil, I am bound to think Christendom is in a way scientifically quite right, though the accepted scientific definition of witchcraft at present is otherwise, and holds witchcraft to be conversing with Natural Science, which of course I cannot accept as the Devil. Thus I cannot reconcile the two definitions, should they mean the same thing; and so I am here really in the position of being at one in opinion with the Roman Catholic missionaries of the fifteenth century, who, as soon as they laid eyes on my friend the witch-doctor, recognised him and his goings on as a mass of witchcraft, and went for the whole affair in an exceeding game way.

But let us take the accepted view, that first propounded by Sir Alfred Lyall; and I humbly beg it to be clearly understood I am only speaking of the bearing of that view on Fetish in West Africa. I was of course fully aware of the accepted view of the innate anta-

gonism between religion and witchcraft when I published in a deliberately scattered form some of my observations on Fetish, being no more desirous of giving a mental lead to white men than to black, but only wistful to find out what they thought of things as they are. The consequence of this action of mine has been, I fear, on the whole a rather more muddled feeling in the white mind regarding Fetish than ever heretofore existed; a feeling that, if what I said was true, (and in this matter of Fetish information no one has gainsaid the truth of it), West African religion was more perplexing than it seemed to be when regarded as a mere degraded brutal superstition or childish foolishness.

However, one distinguished critic has tackled my Fetish, and gallantly: the writer in the *Edinburgh Review*. With his remarks on our heresy regarding the deification of ancestors I have above attempted to deal, owning he is quite right—we do not believe in deified ancestors. I now pass on to his other important criticism, and again own he is quite right, and that "witchcraft and religious rites in West Africa are originally indistinguishable."[1] This is evidently a serious affair for West Africa and me, so I must deal with it carefully, and first quote my critic's words following immediately those just cited. "If this is correct there can be no doubt that such a confusion of the two ideas that in their later forms not only stand widely apart, but are always irreconcilably hostile, denotes the very lowest stage of aboriginal superstition wherever it prevails, for it has been held that, although the line between abject fetishism and witchcraft may be difficult to trace in the elementary stages, yet from the beginning a true distinction can invariably be recognised. According to this theory, the witch is more nearly allied with rudimentary science than with priestcraft, for he relies not upon prayer, worship, or propitiation of divinities, but upon his own secret knowledge and experience of the effect producible by certain tricks and mysterious devices upon the unseen powers, over whom he has obtained a sort

[1] July, 1897, p. 221.

of command. Instead of serving like a priest these powers, he is enabled by his art to make them serve him, and it is for this reason that his practices very soon become denounced and detested by the priesthood."

Now there are many interesting points to be considered in West Africa bearing on the above statement of Sir Alfred Lyall's theory of the nature of witchcraft, —points which I fancy, if carefully considered, would force upon us the strange conclusion that, accepting this theory as a general statement of the nature of witchcraft, there was no witchcraft whatever in West Africa, nothing having "a true distinction" in the native mind from religion. You may say there is no religion and it's all witchcraft, but this is a superficial view to take; you see the orthodox Christian view of witchcraft contains in it an element not present in the West African affair; the Christian regards the witch with hatred as one knowing good, yet choosing evil. The West African has not this choice in his mind; he has to deal with spirits who are not, any of them, up to much in the way of virtue viewed from a human standpoint. I don't say they are all what are called up here devils; a good many of them are what you might call reasonable, respectable, easy-going sort of people; some are downright bad; in fact, I don't think it would be going too far to say that they are all downright bad if they get their tempers up or take a dislike to a man; there is not one of them beneficent to the human race at large. Nzambi is the nearest approach to a beneficent deity I have come across, and I feel she owes much of this to the confusion she profits by, and the Holy Virgin suffers from, in the regions under Nkissism; but Nzambi herself is far from morally perfect and very difficult tempered at times. You need not rely on me in this matter; take the important statement of Dr. Nassau: "Observe, these were distinctly prayers, appeals for mercy, agonising protests; but there was no praise, no love, no thanks, no confession of sin."[1] He was speaking regarding utterances made down there in the face of

[1] *Travels in West Africa.* Macmillan, 1897, p. 453.

great afflictions and sorrow; and there was no praise, because there was no love, I fancy; no thanks because what good was done to the human being was a mere boughten thing he had paid for; no confession of sin, because the Fetish believer does not hold he lives in a state of sin, but that it is a thing he can commit now and again if he is fool enough. Sin to him is not what it is to us, a vile treason against a loving Father, but a very ill-advised act against powerful, nasty-tempered spirits. Herein you see lies one difference between the Christian and the Fetish view—a fundamental one, that must be borne in mind.

Then in the above-quoted passage you will observe that the dislike to witchcraft is traced in a measure to the action of priesthoods. This hatred is undoubted. But witchcraft is as much hated in districts in West Africa where there are no organised priesthoods as in districts where there are—in the regions under the Calabar and Mpongwe schools, for example, where the father of the house is the true priest to the family, where what looks like a priesthood, but which is a law-god-cult only—the secret society—is the dominant social thing. Now this law-god-cult affair, Purroh, Oru, Egbo, Ukukiwe, etc., etc., call it what you please, it's all the same thing, is not the organisation that makes war on witchcraft in West Africa. It deals with it now and then, if it is brought under its official notice; but it is not necessary that this should be done; summary methods are used with witches. It just appeals at once to ordeal, any one can claim it. You can claim it, and administer it yourself to yourself, if you are the accused party and in a hurry. A. says to you, "You're a witch." "I'm not," you ejaculate. I take the bean; down it goes; you're sick or dead long before the elaborate mechanism of the law society has heard of the affair. Of course, if you want to make a big palaver and run yourself and your accuser into a lot of expense you can call in the society; but you needn't. From this and divers things like it I do not think the hatred of witchcraft in West Africa at large has anything originally to

do with the priesthood. You will say, but there is the hatred of witchcraft in West Africa. You have only to shout "*Ifot*" at a man or woman in Calabar, or "*Ndo tchi*" in Fjort-land, and the whole population, so good-tempered the moment before, is turned blood-thirsty. Witches are torn to bits, destroyed in every savage way, when the ordeal has conclusively proved their guilt—mind you, never before. Granted; but I believe this to be just a surging up of that form of terror called hate.

I am old enough to remember the dynamite scares up here, and the Jack the Ripper incidents; then it was only necessary for some one to call out, "Dynamiter" or "Jack the Ripper" at a fellow-citizen, and up surged our own people, all same for one with those Africans, only our people, not being so law-governed, would have shredded the accused without ordeal, had we not possessed that great factor in the formation of public virtue, the police, who intervened, carried away the accused to the ordeal—the police court—where the affair was gone into with judicial calm. Honestly, I don't believe there is the slightest mystic revulsion against witchcraft in West Africa; public feeling is always at bursting-point on witches, their goings-on are a constant danger to every peaceful citizen's life, family, property, and so on, and when the general public thinks it's got hold of one of the vermin it goes off with a bang; but it does not think for one moment that the witch is *per se* in himself a thing apart; he is just a bad man too much, who has gone and taken up with spirits for illegitimate purposes. The mere keeping of a familiar power, which under Christendom is held so vile a thing, is not so held in West Africa. Every one does it; there is not a man, woman, or child who has not several attached spirits for help and preservation from danger and disease. It is keeping a spirit for bad purposes only that is hateful. It is one thing to have dynamite in the hand of the government or a mining company for reasonable reasons, quite another to have it in the hands of enemies to society; and such an enemy is a witch who trains the spirits over which he

has got control to destroy his fellow human beings' lives and properties.

The calling in of ordeal to try the witch before destroying him has many interesting points. The African, be it granted, is tremendously under the dominion of law, and it is the law that such trials should take place before execution; but there is also involved in it another curious fact, and that is that the spirit of the ordeal is held to be able to manage and suppress the bad spirits trained by the witch to destruction. Human beings alone can collar the witch and destroy him in an exemplary manner, but spiritual aid is required to collar the witch's devil, or it would get adrift and carry on after its owner's death. Regarding ordeal affairs I will speak when dealing with legal procedure.

Such being the West African view of witchcraft, I venture to think there are in this world divers reasons for hating witchcraft. There is the fetish one, that he is an enemy to society; there is the priesthood one, that he is a sort of quack or rival practitioner—under this head of priesthood aversion for witchcraft I think we may class the witchcraft that is merely a hovering about of the old religion which the priesthood of an imported religion are anxious to stamp out; and there is that aversion to witchcraft one might call the Protestant aversion, which arises from the feeling that it is a direct sin against God Himself. This latter feeling has been the cause of as violent a persecution of witches, witness the action of King James I. and that of the Quakers in America, as any West African has ever presented to the world. Throughout all these things the fact remains, that whether black, white, or yellow, the witch is a bad man, a murderer in the eyes of Allah as well as those of humanity.

That all witches act by means of poison alone would be too hasty a thing to say, because I think we need hardly doubt that the African is almost as liable to die from a poisonous idea put into his mind as a poisonous herb put into his food; indeed, I do not know that in West Africa we need confine ourselves to saying natives

alone do this, for white men sink and die under an idea that breaks their spirit. All the vital powers are required there to resist the depressing climate. If they are weakened seriously in any way, death is liable to ensue. The profound belief in the power of a witch causes a man who knows, say, that either a nail has been driven into an Nkiss down on the South-West coast, or the Fangaree drum beaten on him up in the Sierra Leone region, to collapse under the terror of it, and I own I can see no moral difference between the guilt of the man or woman who does these things with the intent to slay a fellow-citizen and that of one who puts bush into his chop—both mean to kill and do kill, but both methods are good West African witchcraft. The latter may seem to be an incipient form of natural science, but it seems to me—I say it humbly—that the West African incipient scientist is not the local witch, but that highly respectable gentleman or lady, the village apothecary, the *Nganga bilongo* or the *Abiabok*. The means of killing in vogue in West African witchcraft without the direct employment of poison are highly interesting, but I think it would serve no good purpose for me to give even the few I know in detail. There is one interesting point in this connection. I have said that in order to make a charm efficacious against a particular person you must have preferably some of his blood in your possession, or, failing that, some hair or nail clipping; failing these, some articles belonging intimately to him—a piece of his loin-cloth, or, under the school of Nkissi, a bit of his iron. This I believe to hold good for all true fetish charms; but we have in the Bight of Benin charms which are under the influence of a certain amount of Mohammedan ideas—for example, the deadly charms of the Kufong society. This class of charm does not require absolutely a bit of something nearly connected with the victim, but nevertheless it cannot act at a great distance, or without the element of personal connection. Take the Fangaree charm, for example, to be found among the Mendi people, and all the neighbouring peoples who are liable to go in for Kufong.

Fangaree is the name of a small drum that is beaten by a hammer made of bamboo. The uses of this drum are wide and various, but it also gives its name to the charm, because the charm, like the drum, is beaten with a similar stick. The charm stuff itself is made of a dead man's bone, of different herbs smoked over a fire and powdered the same day, ants'-hill earth, and charcoal. This precious mixture is made into a parcel; that parcel is placed on a frame made of bamboo sticks. On the top of the charm a small live animal—an insect, I am informed, will do—is secured by a string passing over it, and the charm is fixed with wooden forks into the ground on either side. This affair is placed by the murderer close to a path the victim will pass along, and the murderer sits over it, waiting for him to come. When he comes, he is allowed to pass just by, and then his enemy breaks a dry bamboo stick; the noise causes the victim to turn and look in the direction of the noise—*i.e.* on to the charm—and then the murderer hits the live animal on it, calling his victim's name, and the charm is on him. If the animal is struck on the head, the victim's head is affected, and he has violent fits until "he dies from breaking his neck" in one of them; if the animal is struck to tailwards, the victim gets extremely ill, but in this latter case he can buy off the charm and be cured by a Fangaree man. A similar arrangement is in working order under some South-West coast murder societies I am acquainted with. The interesting point, however, is the necessity of establishing the personal connection between the victim and the charm by means of making him look on the charm and calling his name. Without his looking it's no good. Hence it comes that it is held unwise to look behind when you hear a noise o'night in the bush; indeed, no cautious person, with sense in his head and strength in his legs, would dream of doing this unless caught off guard. In connection also with this turning the face being necessary to the working of the Fangaree charm, there is another charm that is worked under Kufong, according to several natives from its

region—the hinterland of Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Ivory Coast—with whom I have associated when we have both been far from our respective homes away in South-West Africa. It is a charm I have never met with as indigenous in the South-West or Oil-Rivers Fetish, and I think it has a heavier trace of Mohammedan influence in it than the Fangaree charm. The way it works is this. A man wants to kill you without showing blood. Only leopard society men do that, and your enemy, we will presume, is not a leopard. So he throws his face on you by a process I need not enter into. You hardly know anything is wrong at first; by-and-by you notice that every scene that you look on, night or day, has got that face in it, not a filmy vision of a thing, but quite material in appearance, only it's in abnormal places for a face to be, and it is a face only. It may be on the wall, or amongst the roof poles, or away in a corner of the hut floor; outdoors it is the same—the face is first always, there just where you can see it. Some of my informants hold that it keeps coming closer to you as time goes on; but others say no; it keeps at one distance all the time. This, however, is a minor point; it is its being there that gets to matter. It is in amongst the bushes at the side of the path, or in the water of the river, or at the end of your canoe, or in the oil in the pots, or in the Manchester cottons in the factory shop. Wherever you look, there it is. In a way it's unobtrusive, it does not spread itself out, or make a noise, or change, yet, sooner or later, in every place, you cannot miss seeing it. At first you think, by changing your environment—going outdoors, coming in, going on a journey, mixing with your fellow-men, or avoiding them—you can get rid of the thing; but you find, when you look round—a thing you are certain to do when the charm has got its grip—for sure that face is there as usual. Now this sort of thing tells on the toughest in time, and you get sick of life when it has always got that face mixed up in it, so sick that you try the other thing—death. This is an ill-advised course, but you do not know in time that, when you kill your-

self, you will find that on the other side, in the other thing, you will see nothing but that face, that unchanging silent face you are so sick of. The Kufong man who has thrown his face at you knows, and when he hears of your suicide he laughs. Naturally you cannot know, because you are not a Kufong man, or the charm could not be put on you. What you "can do in this here most awful go," as Mr. Squeers would say, I am unfortunately not able to tell you. I made many inquiries from men who know "the face," who had had it happen on people in their families, and so on, but in answer to my inquiries as to why the afflicted did not buy it off, what charms there were against it, and so forth, I was always told it was a big charm, that the man who put it on lost something of himself by so doing, so it was never put on except in cases of great hatred that would stick at nothing and would kill; also that it was of no real use for the victim to kill his charmer, though that individual, knowing the pleasure so doing would afford his victim, takes good care to go on a journey, and to keep out of the way until the charm has worked out in suicide. There is a certain amount of common sense in this proceeding which is undoubtedly true African, but there is a sort of imaginative touch which makes me suspect Mohammedan infusion; anyhow I leave you to judge for yourself whether, presupposing you accept the possibility of a man doing such a thing to you or to any one you love, you think he can be safely ignored, or whether he is not an enemy to society who had better be found out and killed—killed in a showy way. Personally I favour the latter course.

There is but one other point in witchcraft in West Africa that I need now detain you with, and that is why a person killed by witchcraft suffers more than one who dies of old age, for herein lies another reason for this hatred of witchcraft. Every human soul in West Africa throughout all the Fetish schools is held to have a certain proper time of incarnation in a human body, whether it be one incarnation or endless series of incarnations; anything that cuts that incarnation period short in-

conveniences the soul, to say the least of it. Under Ellis's school, and I believe throughout all the others, the soul that lives its life in a body fully through is held happy; it is supposed to have learnt its full lesson from life, and to know the way down to the shadowland home and all sorts of things. Hence also comes the respect for the aged, common throughout all West Africa. They are the knowing ones. Such an one was the late Chief Long John of Bonny. Now if this process of development is checked by witchcraft and the soul is prematurely driven from the body, it does not know all that it should, and its condition is therefore miserable. It is, as it were, sent blind, or deaf, or lame into the spirit-land. This is a thing not only dreaded by individuals for themselves, but hated for those they love; hence the doer of it is a hated thing. You must remember that when you get keen hatred you must allow for keen affection, it is not human to have one without the other. That the Africans are affectionate I am fully convinced. This affection does not lie precisely on the same lines as those of Europeans, I allow. It is not with them so deeply linked with sex; but the love between mother and child, man and man, brother and sister, woman and woman, is deep, true, and pure, and it must be taken into account in observing their institutions and ideas, particularly as to this witchcraft, where it shows violently and externally in hatred only to the superficial observer. I well remember gossiping with a black friend in a plantation in the Calabar district on witchcraft, and he took up a stick and struck a plant of green maize, breaking the stem of it, saying, "There, like that is the soul of a man who is witched, it will not ripen now."

We will now turn to the consideration of that class whose business in life is mainly to guard the community from witchcraft and from miscellaneous evil spirits acting on their own initiative, the Fetish Men of West Africa, namely, those men and women who devote their lives to the cult of West African religion. Such people you find in every West African district; but their position differs under different schools, and it is

in connection with them that we must recognise the differences in the various schools, remembering that the form of Fetish makes the form of Fetish Man, not the Fetish Man the form of Fetish. He may, as it were, embroider it, complicate it, mystify it, as is the nature of all specialists in all professions, but primarily he is under it, at any rate in West Africa, where you find the Fetish Man in every district, but in every district in a different form. For example, look at him under the Ellis school. Where there are well-defined gods, there your Fetish Man is quite the priest, devoting himself to the cult of one god publicly, probably doing a little general practice into the bargain with other minor spirits. To the laity he of course advertises the god he serves as the most reliably important one in the neighbourhood; but it has come under my notice, and you will find under Ellis's, that if the priest of a god gets personally unwell and finds his own deity ineffective, he will apply for aid to a professional brother who serves another god. Below Ellis's school, in the Calabar school, your Fetish Man is somewhat different; the gods are not so definite or esteemed, and the Fetish Man is becoming a member of a set of men who deal with gods in a lump, and have the general management of minor spirits. Below this school, in the Mpongwe, the Fetish Man is even less specialised as regards one god; he is here a manager of spirits at large, with the assistance of a strong spirit with whom he has opened up communication. Below this school, in that of Nkissi, the Fetish Man becomes more truly priest-like—he is the Nganga of an Nkiss; but nevertheless his position is a different one to that of the priest in Ellis's school; here he is in a better position than in the Mpongwe school, but in an inferior one to that in Ellis's, where he is not the lone servitor or manager for a god, but a member of a powerful confraternity. You must bear in mind, of course, that the Fetish Man is always, from a lay standpoint, a highly important person; but professionally, I cannot but think, a priest say of Tando in Ashantee or of Shango in Dahomey, is of a higher grade than a

Nganga to an Nkiss, certainly far higher than a Fetish Man under the Mpongwe school, where every house father and every village chief does a lot of his own Fetish without professional assistance. Of course chiefs and house fathers do a certain amount in all districts—in fact, in West Africa every man and woman does a certain amount of Fetish for himself; but where, as in Ellis's school, you get a regular set of priests and plenty of them, the religion falls into their hands to a greater extent. I feel that the study of the position of Fetish Men is deserving of great attention. I implore the student who may take it up to keep the Fetish Man for practical purposes distinct from the gentleman who represents the law-god cult—the secret tribal society. If you persist in mixing them, you will have in practical politics as fine a mess as if you mixed up your own Bench of Bishops with the Woolsack. I beg to contribute to the store of knowledge on this point sundry remarks sent me on most excellent native authority from the Gold Coast:—

"The inhabitants of Cape Coast must congratulate themselves that they enjoy the protection of seventy-seven fetishes. Every town (and this town) has one fetish house or temple, often built in a square or oblong form of mud or swish, and thatched over, or constructed of sticks or poles placed in a circular form and thatched. In these temples several images are generally placed. Every Fetish Man or priest, moreover, has his private fetishes in his own house, one of a bird, stones encased by string, large lumps of cinder from an iron furnace, calabashes, and bundles of sticks tied together with string. All these are stained with red ochre and rubbed over with eggs. They are placed on a square platform and shrouded from the vulgar gaze.

"The fetishes are regarded as spiritual intelligent beings who make the remarkable objects of nature their residence or enter occasionally into the images and other artificial representations which have been duly consecrated by certain ceremonies. It is the belief of this people that the fetishes not unfrequently render

themselves visible to mortals. Thus the great fetish of the rock on which Cape Coast Castle stands is said to come forth at night in human form, but of superhuman size, and to proceed through the town dressed in white to chase away evil spirits.

"In all the countries along the Coast (Gold) the regular fetish day is Tuesday. The fishermen would expect that, were they to go out on that day, it would spoil their fishing.

"The priest's office may in some cases be hereditary, but it is not uniformly so, for the children of Fetish Men sometimes refuse to devote themselves to the pursuits of their parents, and engage in other occupations. Any one may enter the office after suitable training, and parents who desire that their children may be instructed in its mysteries place them with a Fetish Man, who receives a premium for each. The order of Fetish Men is further augmented by persons who declare that the fetish has suddenly seized on them. A series of convulsive and unnatural bodily distortions establish their claim. Application is made to the fetish for counsel and aid in every domestic and public emergency. When persons find occasion to consult a private Fetish Man, they take a present of gold-dust and rum, and proceed to his house. He receives the presents, and either puts a little of the rum on the head of every image or pours a small quantity on the ground before the platform as an offering to the whole pantheon; then, taking a brass pan with water in it, he sits down with the pan between him and the fetishes, and his inquirers also seat themselves to await the result. Having made these preparatory arrangements, looking earnestly into the water, he begins to snap his fingers, and addressing the fetish, extols his power, telling him that the people have arrived to consult him, and requesting him to come and give the desired answer. After a time the Fetish Man is wrought up into a state of fury. He shakes violently and foams at the mouth; this is to intimate that the fetish was come home and that he himself is no longer the speaker, but the fetish, who uses

his mouth and speaks by him. He now growls like a tiger and asks the people if they have brought rum, requiring them at the same time to present it to him. He drinks, and then inquires for what purpose they have sent for him. If a relative is ill, they reply that such a member of their family is sick and they have tried all the means they could devise to restore him, but without success, and they, knowing he is a great fetish, have come to ask his aid, and beg him to teach them what they should do. He then speaks kindly to them, expresses a hope that he shall be able to help them, and says, 'I go to see.' It is imagined that the fetish then quits the priest, and, after a silence of a few minutes, he is supposed to return, and gives his response to the inquirers.

"In cases of great difficulty the oracle at Abrah is the last resort of the Fantees. This notable oracle is always consulted at night. They find a large fire made upon the ground, and the presents they have brought they place in the hands of the priests who are in attendance. They are then directed to elevate their presents above their heads and to fix their eyes steadfastly upon the ground, for should they look up, the fetish, it is said, would inflict blindness on them for their sacrilegious gaze. After a time the oracle gives a response in a shrill, small voice, intended to convey the idea that it proceeds from an unearthly source, and the inquirers, having obtained the end of their visit, then depart.

"In cases of bodily affliction the fetish orders medical preparations for the patient. If the malady of the patient does not appear to yield to such applications, the fetish is again consulted, and in some cases, as a further expedient, the priest takes a fowl and ties it to a stick, by which operation it is barbarously squeezed to death. The stick is then placed in the path leading to the house for the purpose of deterring evil spirits from approaching it. When the patient is a rich man, several sheep are sacrificed, and he is fetished until the last moment arrives amidst the howls of a number of old Fetish Women, who continue to besmear with eggs and

other medicine the walls and doorposts of his house and everything that is around him until he has ceased to breathe."

Not only does the African depart from life under the care of Fetish Men—and, as my valued correspondent ungallantly remarks, "old Fetish Women"—but he is met, as it were, by them on his arrival. My correspondent says "as soon as the child is born the Fetish Man binds certain fetish preparations round his limbs, using at the same time a form of incantation or prayer. This is done to fortify the infant against all kinds of evil. On the eighth day after the birth, the father of the child, accompanied by a number of friends, proceeds to the house of the mother. If he be a rich man, he takes with him a gallon of ardent spirits to be used on the festive occasion. On arriving at the house, the friends form a circle round the father, who delivers a kind of address in which he acknowledges the kindness of the gods for giving him the child, and calls upon those present also to thank the fetishes on his account; then, taking the child in his arms, he squirts upon it a little spirit from his mouth, pronouncing the name by which it is to be called. A second name which the child usually takes is that of the day of the week on which it is born. The following are the names of the days in the Fanti language, varied in their orthography according to the sex of the child:—

	Male.	Female.
Sunday	Quisi	Akosua.
Monday	Kujot	Ajua.
Tuesday	Quabina	Abmaba.
Wednesday	Quaku	Ekua.
Thursday	Quahu	Aba.
Friday	Kufi	Efua.
Saturday	Qamina	Ama."

Those ceremonials called on the Coast "customs" are the things that show off the Fetish Man at the best in more senses of the word than one. We will take the yam custom. The intentions of these yam customs are

twofold—firstly they are a thanksgiving to the fetishes for allowing their people to live to see the new yams, and for the new yams, but they are also institutions to prevent the general public eating the new yam before it's ready. The idea is, and no doubt rightly, that unripe yams are unwholesome, and the law is that no new yams must be eaten until the yam custom is made. The Fetish Men settle when the yams are in a fit state to pass into circulation, and then make the custom. It generally occurs at the end of August, but is sometimes kept back until the beginning of September. In Fantee all the inhabitants of the towns assemble under the shade of the grove adjoining the fetish hut, and a sheep and a number of fowls are killed, part of their flesh is mixed with boiled yams and palm-oil, and a portion of this mixture is placed on the heads of the images, and the remainder is thrown about before the fetish hut as a peace-offering to the deities.

At Winnebah, on the Gold Coast, there is an interesting modification in the yam custom. The principal fetish of that place, it is believed, will not be satisfied with a sheep, but he must have a deer brought alive to his temple, and there sacrificed. Accordingly on the appointed day every year when the custom is to be celebrated, almost all the inhabitants except the aged and infirm go into the adjoining country—an open park-like country, studded with clumps of trees. The women and children look on, give good advice, and shriek when necessary, while the men beat the bush with sticks, beat tom-toms, and halloo with all their might. While thus engaged, my correspondent remarks in his staid way, "sometimes a leopard starts forth, but it is usually so frightened with the noise and confusion that it scampers off in one direction as fast as the people run from it in another. When a deer is driven out, the chase begins, the people try to run it down, flinging sticks at its legs. At last it is secured and carried exultingly to the town with shoutings and drummings. On entering the town they are met by the aged people carrying staves, and, having gone in procession round the town, they proceed

to the fetish house, where the animal is sacrificed, and partly offered to the fetish, partly eaten by the priests."

These yam customs are at their fullest in the Benin Bights, but you get a custom made for the new yam in all the districts lower down. These customs have long been credited with being stained by human sacrifices. Not altogether unjustly. You can always read human sacrifice for goats and fowls when you are considering a district inhabited by true Negroes, and the occasion is an important one, because in West Africa a human sacrifice is the most persuasive one to the fetishes. It is just with them as with a chief—if you want to get some favour from him you must give him a present. A fowl or a goat or a basket of vegetables, or anything like that is quite enough for most favours; but if you want a big thing, and want it badly, you had better give him a slave, because the slave is alike more intrinsically valuable and also more useful. So far as I know, all human beings sacrificed pass into the service of the fetish they are sacrificed to. They are not merely killed that he may enjoy their blood, but that he may have their assistance. Fetishes have much to do, and an extra pair of hands is to them always acceptable. As for the importance of these harvest customs to the general system of Fetish, I think in West Africa it is small. The goings-on, the licentiousness and general jollification that accompany them, upsetting law and order for days, give them a fallacious look of importance; but I think far more really near the heart of the Fetish thought-form is the lonely man who steals at night into the forest to gain from Sasabonsum a charm, and the woman who, on her way back from market, throws down before the fetish houses she passes a scrap of her purchases; compared to the cult of the law-god, well, yam customs are dirty water price, palaver, and insignificant politically.

I have dealt here with Fetish as far as the position of the human being is concerned, because this phase may make it more comprehensible to my fellow white men who regard the human being as the main thing in the

created universe, but I must beg you to remember that this idea of the importance of the human race is not held by the African. The individual is supremely important to himself, and he values his friends and relations and so on, but abstract affection for humanity at large or belief in the sanctity of the lives of people with whom he is unrelated and unacquainted, the African barely possesses. He is only capable of feeling this abstract affection when under the influence of one of the great revealed religions which place the human being higher in the scale of Creation. This comes from no cruelty of mind *per se*, but is the result of the hardness of the fight he has to fight against the world; and possessing this view of the equal, if not greater importance of many of the things he sees round him, the African conceives these things also have their fetish—a fetish on the same ground idea, but varying from human fetish. The politics of Mungo mah Lobeh, the mountain, with the rest of nature, he believes to exist. The Alemba rapid has its affairs clearly, but the private matters of these very great people are things the human being had better keep out of; and it is advisable for him to turn his attention to making terms with them and go into their presence with his petition when their own affairs are prosperous, when their tempers are not as it were up over some private ultra-human affair of their own. I well remember the opinions expressed by my companions regarding the folly—mine, of course—of obtruding ourselves on Mungo when that noble mountain was vexed too much, and the opinion expressed by an Efik friend in a tornado that came down on us. Well, there you have this difference. I instinctively say "us." She did not think we were objects of interest to the tornado or the forest it was scourging. She took it they had a sort of family row on, and we might get hit with the bits, therefore it was highly unfortunate that we were present at the meeting. Again, it is the same with the surf. The boat-boys see it's in a nasty temper, they keep out of it, it may be better to-morrow, then it will tolerate them, for it has no real palaver with them

individually. Of course you can go and upset the temper of big nature spirits, but when you are not there they have their own affairs.

Hence it comes that we have in Fetish a religion in which its believers do not hold that devotion to religion constitutes Virtue. The ordinary citizen is held to be most virtuous who is least mixed up in religious affairs. He can attain Virtue, the love and honour of his fellow-men, by being a good husband and father, an honest man in trade, a just man in the palaver-house, and he must, for the protection of his interests, that is to say, not only his individual well-being, but the well-being of those dependent on him, go in to a certain extent for religious practices. He must associate with spirits, because spirits are in all things and everywhere and over everything; and the good citizen deals with the other spirits as he deals with that class of spirits we call human beings; he does not cheat the big ones of their dues; he spills a portion of his rum to them; he gives them their white calicoes; he treats his slave spirits honourably, and he uses his slave spirits for no bad purpose, and if any great grief falls on him he calls on the great over-lord of gods, mentioning these things. But men are not all private citizens; there are men whose destiny puts them in high places—men who are not only house fathers but who are tribe fathers. They, to protect and further the interests of those under them, must venture greatly and further, and deal with more powerful spirits, as it were, their social equals in spiritdom. These good chiefs in their higher grade dealings preserve the same clean-handed conduct. And besides these there are those men, the Fetish Men, who devote their lives to combating evil actions through witches and miscellaneous spirits who prey on mankind. These men have to make themselves important to important spirits. It is risky work for them, for spirits are a risky set to deal with. Up here in London, when I have to deal with a spirit as manifest in the form of an opinion, or any big mind-form incarnate in one man, or in thousands,

I often think of an African friend of mine who had troubles, and I think sympathetically, for his brother explained the affair to me. He was an educated man. "You see," he said, "my brother's got a strong Ju Ju, but it's a damned rocky Ju Ju to get on with."

CHAPTER VIII

AFRICAN MEDICINE

Mainly from the point of view of the native apothecary, to which is added some account of the sleep disease and the malignant melancholy.

THERE is, as is in all things West African, a great deal of fetish ceremonial mixed up with West African medical methods. Underlying them throughout there is the fetish form of thought; but it is erroneous to believe that all West African native doctors are witch doctors, because they are not. One of my Efik friends, for example, would no more think of calling in a witch doctor for a simple case of rheumatism than you would think of calling in a curate or a barrister; he would just call in the equivalent to our general practitioner, the abiabok. If he grew worse instead of better, he would then call in his equivalent to our consulting physician, the witch doctor, the abiadiong. But if he started being ill with something exhibiting cerebral symptoms he would have in the witch doctor at once.

This arises from the ground principle of all West African physic. Everything works by spirit on spirit, therefore the spirit of the medicine works on the spirit of the disease. Certain diseases are combatable by certain spirits in certain herbs. Other diseases are caused by spirits not amenable to herb-dwelling spirits; they must be tackled by spirits of a more powerful grade. The

witch doctor who belongs to the school of Nkissism will become more profound on this matter still, and will tell you all herbs, indeed everything that comes out of the Earth, have in them some of the power of the Earth, Nkissi nisi; but the general view is the less concrete one—that it is a matter of only certain herbs having power. This I have been told over and over again in various West Coast tongues by various West African physicians, and in it lies the key to their treatment of disease—a key without which many of their methods are incomprehensible, but which shows up most clearly in the methods of the witch doctor himself. In the practice of the general practitioner, or, more properly speaking, the apothecary, it is merely a theory, just as a village chemist here may prescribe blue pill without worrying himself about its therapeutic action from a scientific point of view.

Before I pass on to the great witch doctor, the physician, I must detain you with a brief account of the neglected-by-traveller-because-less-showy African village apothecary, a really worthy person, who exists in every West African district I know of; often, as in the Calabar and Bonny region, a doctor whose practice extends over a fair-sized district, wherein he travels from village to village. If he comes across a case, he sits down and does his best with it, may be for a fortnight or a month at a time, and when he has finished with it and got his fee, off he goes again. Big towns, of course, have a resident apothecary, but I never came across a town that had two apothecaries. It may be professional etiquette, but, though I never like to think evil of the Profession whatever colour its complexion may be, it may somehow be connected with a knowledge of the properties of herbs, for I observed when at Corisco that an apothecary from the mainland who was over there for a visit shrank from dining with the local medico.

These apothecaries are, as aforesaid, learned in the properties of herbs, and they are the surgeons, in so far as surgery is ventured on. A witch doctor would not dream of performing an operation. Amongst these

apothecaries there are lady doctors, who, though a bit dangerous in pharmacy, yet, as they do not venture on surgery, are, on the whole, safer than their *confrères*, for African surgery is heroic.

Many of the apothecaries' medical methods are fairly sound, however. The Dualla practitioner is truly great on poultices for extracting foreign substances from wounds, such as bits of old iron cooking pot, a very frequent foreign substance for a man to get into him in West Africa, owing to pots being broken up and used as bullets. Almost incredible stories are told by black men and white in Cameroons concerning the efficiency of these poultices; one I heard from a very reliable white authority there of a man who had been shot with bits of iron pot in the thigh. The white doctor extracted several pieces, and declared he had got them all out; but the man went on suffering and could not walk, so finally a country doctor was called in, and he applied his poultice. In a few minutes he removed it, and on its face lay two pieces of iron pot. The white doctor said they had been in the poultice all the time, but he did not carry public opinion with him, for the patient recovered rapidly.

The Negroes do not seem to me to go in for baths in medical treatment quite so much as the Bantu; they hold more with making many little incisions in the skin round a swollen joint, then encasing it with clay and keeping a carefully tended fire going under it. But the Bantu is given greatly to baths, accompanied by massage, particularly in the treatment of that great West African affliction, rheumatism. The Mpongwe make a bath for the treatment of this disease by digging a suitably sized hole in the ground and putting into it seven herbs—whereof I know the native names only, not the scientific—and in addition in go cardamums and peppers. Boiling water is then plentifully poured over these, and the patient is laid on and covered with the parboiled green stuff. Next a framework of twigs is placed over him, and he is hastily clayed up to keep the steam in, only his head remaining above ground. In this bath

he is sometimes kept a few hours, sometimes a day and a half. He is liable to give the traveller who may happen suddenly on him while under treatment the idea that he is an atrocity; but he is not; and when he is taken out of the bath-poultice he is rubbed and kneaded all over, plenty more hot water being used in the process, this indeed being the palladium of West Coast physic.

The Fjort tribe do not bury their rheumatic patients until they are dead and all their debts paid, but they employ the vapour bath. My friend, Mr. R. E. Dennett, who has for the past eighteen years lived amongst the Fjort and knows them as no other white man does, and knows also my insatiable thirst for any form of West African information, has kindly sent me some details of Fjort medical methods, which I give in his own words—"The Fjort have names for many diseases; aches are generally described as *tanta ki tanta*; they say the head suffers *Ntu tanta ki tanta*, the chest suffers *Mtima tanta ki tanta*, and so on. Rheumatism that keeps to the joints of the bones and cripples the sufferer is called *Ngoyo*, while ordinary rheumatism is called *Mvougo*. They generally try to cure this disease by giving the sufferers vapour baths. They put the leaves of the *Nvuka* into a pot of boiling water, and place the pot between the legs of the patient, who is made to sit up. They then cover up the patient and the pot with coverings.

"They try to relieve the local pain by spluttering the affected part with chalk, pepper, and logwood, and the leaves of certain plants that have the power of blistering.

"Small-pox they try to cure by smearing the body of the patient over with the pulped leaves of the mzeuzil. Palm oil is also used. These patients are taken to the woods, where a hut is built for them, or not, according to the wealth and desire of their relations. If poor they are often allowed to die of starvation. A kind of long thin worm that creeps about under the eyelid is called *Loyia*, and is skilfully extracted by many of the natives

by means of a needle or piece of wood cut to a sharp point.

"Blind boils they call *Fwuma*, and they cure them by splintering over them the pulped root *Nchechi*, mixed with red and white earth. Leprosy they call *Boisi*, ague *Chiosi*, matter from the ear *Mafina*, rupture *Sangafulla*. But diseases of the lungs, heart liver, and spleen seem to puzzle the native leeches, and many natives die from these terrible ills. Cupping and bleeding, which they do with the hollow horns of the goat and the sharpened horn of a kid, are the remedies usually resorted to.

"All persons are supposed to have the power to give their enemies these different sicknesses. Amulets, frontlets, bracelets, and waistbands charged with medicines are also used as either charms or cures.

"A woman who was stung by a scorpion went nearly mad, and rushing into the river, tried to drown herself. I tried my best to calm her and cure her by the application of a few simple remedies, but she kept us awake all night, and we had to hold her down nearly the whole time. I called in a native surgeon to see if he could do anything, and he spluttered some medicine over her and, placing himself opposite to her, shouted at her and the evil spirit that was in her. She became calmer, and the surgeon left us. As I was afraid of a relapse, I sent the woman to be cured in a town close by. The Princess of the town picked out the sting of the scorpion with a needle, and gave the woman some herbs, which acted as a strong purge, and cured her. As the Nganga bilongo (apothecary) is busy curing the patient, he generally has a white fowl tied to a string fastened to a peg in the ground close to him. I have described this in *Seven Years among the Fjort*."

I think this communication of Mr. Dennett's is of much interest, and I hastily beg to remark that, if you have not got a devoted friend to hold you down all night, call in an apothecary in the morning time, and then hand you over to a Princess—things that are not always handy even in West Africa when you have been stung by a scorpion—things that, on the other hand, are

always handy in West Africa—carbonate of soda applied promptly to the affected part will save you from wanting to drown yourself and much other inconvenience. The sting should be extracted regardless of the shedding of blood, carbonate of soda in hot water washed over the place, and then a poultice faced with carbonate of soda put on.

Although I do not say these West African doctors possess any specific for rheumatism, it is an undoubted fact that the South-West Coast tribes, with their poultices and vapour baths, are very successful in treating it, more so than the true Negroes, with their clay plaster and baking method. Rheumatism is a disease the Africans seem especially liable to, whatever may be the local climate, whether it be that of the reeking Niger Delta, or the dry delightful climate of Cabinda; moreover, my friends who go whaling tell me the Bermuda negroes also suffer from rheumatism severely, and are "a perfect cuss," wanting to come and sit in the blood and blubber of fresh-killed whales. Small-pox is a vile scourge to Africa. The common treatment is to smear the body of the patient with the pulped leaves of the mzeuzil palm and with palm oil; but I cannot say the method is successful, save in preventing pitting, which it certainly does. The mortality from this disease, particularly among the South-West Coast tribes, is simply appalling. But it is extremely difficult to make the bush African realise that it is infectious, for he regards it as a curse from a great Nature spirit, sent in consequence of some sin, such as a man marrying within the restricted degree, or something of that kind. Mr. Dennett mentions small-pox patients being sent into the bush with more or less accommodation provided. Mr. Du Chaillu gave Mr. Fraser the idea that the Bakele tribe habitually drove their small-pox sick into the bush and neglected them, which certainly, from my knowledge of the tribe, I must say is not their constant habit by any means. I venture to think that this rough attempt at isolation among the Fjort is a remnant of the influence of the great Portuguese domination of the kingdom of Congo

in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, when the Roman Catholic missionaries got hold of the Fjort as no other West African has since been got hold of. Nevertheless the keeping of the sick in huts you will find in almost all districts in places—*i.e.* round the house of a great doctor. My friend Miss Mary Slessor, of Okŷon, has the bush round her compound fairly studded with little temporary huts, each with a patient in. You see, distinguished doctors everywhere are a little uppish, and so their patients have to come to them. Such doctors are usually specialists, noted for a cure of some particular disease, and often patients will come to such a man from towns and villages a week's journey or more away, and then build their little shantie near his residence, and remain there while undergoing the cure.

There is a prevalent Coast notion that white men do not catch small-pox from black, but I do not think this is, at any rate, completely true. I was informed when in Loanda that during an epidemic of it amongst the natives, every white man had had a more or less severe touch, and I have known of cases of white men having small-pox in other West Coast places, small-pox they must either have caught from natives or have made themselves, which is improbable. I fancy it is a matter connected with the vaccination state of the white, although there seem to be some diseases prevalent among natives from which whites are immune—the Yaws, for example.

Less terrible in its ravages than small-pox, because it is far more limited in the number of its victims, is leprosy; still you will always find a case or so in a district. You will find the victims outcasts from society, not from a sense of its being an infectious disease, but because it is confounded with another disease, held to be a curse from an aggrieved Nature spirit. There was at Okŷon when I was there a leper who lived in a regular house of his own, not a temporary hospital hut, but a house with a plantation. He led a lonely life, having no wife or family or slave; he was himself a slave, but not called on for

service—it was just a lonely life. People would drop in on him and chat, and so on, but he did not live in town. There was also another one there, who had his own people round him, and to whom people would send their slaves, because he was regarded as a good doctor; but he also had his house in the bush, and not in town.

Undoubtedly the diseases that play the greatest continuous havoc with black life in West Africa are small-pox, divers forms of pneumonia, heart-disease, and tetanus, the latter being largely responsible for the terrible mortality among children; but the two West African native diseases most interesting to the European on account of their strangeness, are the malignant melancholy and the sleep sickness, and strangely enough both these diseases seem to have their head centre in one region—the lower Congo. They occur elsewhere, but in this region they are constantly present, and now and again seem to take an epidemic form. Regarding the first-named, I am still collecting information, for I cannot tell whether the malignant melancholy of the lower Congo is one and the same with the hystero-hypochondria, the home-sickness of the true Negro. In the lower Congo I was informed that this malignant melancholy had the native name signifying throwing backwards, from its being the habit of the afflicted to throw themselves backwards into water when they attempted a drowning form of suicide.[1] They do not, however, confine themselves to attempts to drown themselves only, but are equally given to hanging, the constant thing about all their attempts being a lack of enthusiasm about getting the thing definitely done: the patient seems to potter at it, not much caring whether he does successfully hang or drown himself or no, but just keeps on, as if he could not help doing it. This has probably given rise to the

[1] An experienced medical man from West Africa informs me that he considers the Africans very liable to hysterical disease, and he attributes the throwing backwards to the patient's desire not to spoil his or her face, a thing ladies are especially careful of, and says that turning a lady face downwards on the sand is as efficacious in breaking up the hysterical fit as throwing water over their clothes is with us.

native method of treating this disease—namely, holding a meeting of the patient's responsible relations, who point out elaborately to him the advantages of life over death, and inquire of him his reasons for hankering after the latter. If in spite of these representations he persists in a course of habitual suicide, he is knocked on the head and thrown into the river; for it is a nuisance to have a person about who is continually hanging himself to the house ridge pole and pulling the roof half off, or requiring a course of sensational rescues from drowning.

The sleep disease[1] is also a strange thing. When I first arrived in Africa in 1893 there had just been a dreadful epidemic of it in the Kakongo and lower Congo region, and I saw a good many cases, and became much interested in it, and have ever since been trying to gather further information regarding it.

Dr. Patrick Manson in his important paper[2] states that it has never been known to affect any one who has not at one time or another been resident within this area, and observes on its distribution that "it seems probable that as our knowledge of Africa extends, this disease will be found endemic here and there throughout the basins of the Senegal, the Niger, the Congo, and their affluents. We have no information of its existence in the districts drained by the Nile and the Zambesi, nor anywhere on the eastern side of the continent." As far as my own knowledge goes the centres of this disease are the Senegal and the Congo. I never saw a case in the Oil Rivers, nor could I hear of any, though I made every inquiry; the cases I heard of from Lagos and the Oil Rivers were among people who had been down as labourers, &c., to the Congo. What is the reason of this I do not know, but certainly the people of the lower Congo are much given to all kinds

[1] Negro lethargy; Maladie du Sommeil; Enfermedad del sueno; Nelavane (Oulof); Dadane (Sereres); Toruahebue (Mendi); Ntolo (Fjort).

[2] *System of Medicine.* Volume II. Edited by Dr. Clifford Allbutt. Macmillan & Co., 1897.

of diseases, far more so than those inhabiting the dense forest regions of Congo Français, or the much-abused mangrove swamps of the Niger Delta.

Dr. Manson says, "The sleeping sickness has been attributed to such things as sunstroke, beriberi, malaria, poison, peculiar foods, such as raw bitter manioc, and diseased grain; it is evident, however, that none of these things explains all the facts." In regard to this I may say I have often heard it ascribed to the manioc when in Kakongo, the idea being that when manioc was soaked in water surcharged with the poisonous extract, it had a bad effect. Certainly in Kakongo this was frequently the case in many districts where water was comparatively scarce. The pools used for soaking the root in stank, and the prepared root stank, in the peculiar way it can, something like sour paste, with a dash of acetic acid, and thereby the villages stank and the market-places ditto, in a way that could be of no use to any one except a person anxious to find his homestead in the dark; but Dr. Manson's suggestion is far more likely to be the correct one. Against it I can only urge that in some districts where I am informed by my medical friends that *Filaria perstans* is very prevalent, such as Calabar, the Niger, and the Ogowé, sleeping sickness is not prevalent. Dr. Manson says, "The fact that the disease can be acquired only in a comparatively limited area, suggests that the cause is similarly limited; and the fact that the disease may develop years after the endemic area has been quitted, suggests that the cause is of such a nature that it may be carried away from the endemic area and remain latent, as regards its disease-producing qualities for a considerable period; even for years." He then goes on to say, "*Filaria perstans*, so far as is known, is limited in its geographical distribution to Western Equatorial Africa—that is to say, it can be acquired there only—and it may continue in active life for many years after its human host has left the country in which alone it can be acquired. We also know that similar entozoa in their wanderings in the tissues by accident of location, or by disease, or

injury of their organs, not infrequently give rise to grave lesions in their hosts. I therefore suggest that possibly *Filaria perstans* may in some way be responsible for the sleeping sickness. I know that this parasite is extremely common in certain sleeping sickness districts, and moreover, I have found it in the blood of a considerable number of cases of this disease—in six out of ten—including that described by Mackenzie. There are many difficulties in the way of establishing this hypothesis, but there is a sufficient inherent probability about it to make it well worth following up."

The most important statement that I have been able to get regarding it so far, has been one sent me by Mr. R. E. Dennett; who says, "The sleeping sickness, though prevalent throughout Kakongo and Loango, is most common in the north of Loango and the south of Kakongo, that is north of the river Quillou and among the Mussorongo.

"What the cause of the sickness is, it is hard to say, but it is one of those scourges which is ever with us. The natives say any one may get it, that it is not hereditary, and only infectious in certain stages. They avoid the *dejecta* of affected persons, but they do not force the native to live in the bush as they do a person affected by small-pox.

"Pains in the head chiefly just above the nose are first experienced, and should these continue for a month or so it is to be expected that the disease is *Madotchila*, or the first stage of the sleeping sickness.

"In the word *Madotchila* we have the idea of a state of being poisoned or bewitched. At this stage the sickness is curable, but as the sick man will never admit that he has the sickness and will suffer excruciating pain rather than complain, and as it is criminal to suggest to the invalid or others that he is suffering from the dreadful disease, it often happens that it gets great hold of the afflicted and from time to time he falls down overcome by drowsiness.

"Then he swells up and has the appearance of one suffering from dropsy, and this stage of the disease is

called *Malasi*, literally meaning thousands (*Kulasi* = one thousand, the verb *Koula* to become great and *si* the productive fly).

"This appears to be the acute stage of the disease, and death often occurs within eight days from the beginning of the swelling.

"Then comes the stage *Ntolotolo*, meaning sleep or mock death.

"The next stage is called *Tchela nzela mbela*, that is the knife cutting stage, referring to the operation of bleeding as part of the cure; and the last stage of the disease is called *Nlemba Ngombo*. *Lemba* means to cease. The rites of *Lemba* are those which refer to the marriage of a woman who swears to die with her husband, or rather to cease to live at the same time as he does. *Ngombo* is the name of the native grass cloth in which, before the *Nlele* or cotton cloth of the white man appeared, the dead were wrapped previous to burial. Thus in the name *Nlemba Ngombo* we have the meaning of marriage to the deathly winding sheet or shroud.

"I remember how poor Sanda (a favourite servant of Mr. Dennett's, a Mussorong boy) was taken sick with pains in his head which I at first mistook for simple headache. As he was of great service to me I kept him in the factory instead of sending him to town (the custom with invalids in Kakongo is that they should go to their town to be doctored). I purged him and gave him strong and continued doses of quinine, and he got better; but from time to time he suffered from recurring headache and drowsiness, and on one occasion when I was vexed at finding him asleep and suspecting him of dissipation, was going to punish him, I was informed by another servant that the poor fellow was suffering from the sleeping sickness. I at once sent him to town with sufficient goods to pay his doctor's bill, and his relations did all in their power to have him properly cured, taking him many miles to visit certain Ngangas famed for the cure of this fell disease.

"He came back to me well and happy. The next year, however, the malady returned, and he went to town

and gradually wasted away. They told me that sores upon one of his arms had caused him to lose a hand, which he lived to see buried before him. Sanda was of royal blood, so his body was taken across from the north bank to San Antonio or Sonio, on the south bank of the Congo, and there he was buried with his fathers.

"Another sad case was that of a woman who lived in the factory.

"As a child, it appeared afterwards, she had suffered from the disease, and had been cured by the good French doctor then resident in Landana (Dr. Lucan). I knew nothing of this at the time, and put her sickness down to drink, but got a doctor to see her. He could not make out what was the matter, but thought it might possibly be some nervous disease; altogether we were completely puzzled.

"On one occasion during my absence she nearly tortured one of her children to death by stabbing her with a needle. On my return, and when I heard what she had done, I was very angry with her, and turned her out of the factory, and shortly afterwards the poor creature died in the swelling state of the disease.

"Joaõ (a more or less civilised native) tells me that one of his wives was cured of this sleeping sickness. She was living with him in a white man's factory when she had it, and on one occasion fell upon a demijohn and cut her back open rather seriously—the white man cured her so far as the wound was concerned. A native doctor, a Nganga of Kakamucka, later on cured the sleeping sickness. He first gave her an emetic, then each day he gave her a kind of Turkish bath; that is, having boiled certain herbs in water, he placed her within the boiling decoction under a covering of cloth, making her perspire freely. Towards nightfall he poured some medicine up her nostrils and into her eyes, so that in the morning when she awoke, her eyes and nose were full of matter; at the same time he cupped and bled her in the locality of the pain in the head. What the medicines were I cannot say, neither will the

Nganga tell any one save the man he means shall succeed him in his office.

"The native doctors appear to know when the disease has become incurable and the life of the patient is merely a question of a few days, for once while I was at Chilinowango, on the lower Congo, I heard the village carpenter hammering nails into planks, and asked my servant what they were doing. 'Building Buite's coffin,' he said. 'What, is he dead?' said I. 'No, but he must die soon,' he answered. This statement was confirmed by the relations of Buite, who came to me for rum as my share towards his funeral expenses. Imagine my feelings when, shortly after this, Buite, swollen out of all likeness to his former self, crawled along to the shop and asked me for a gallon of rum to help him pay his doctor's bill.

"A doctor of the Congo Free State began to take an interest in the sickness and asked me to persuade some one suffering from the disease to come and place himself under his care, promising that he would have a place apart made for him at the station, so that he could study the sickness and try to cure the poor fellow. After a good deal of trouble I got him a patient willing to remain with him, but owing to some red tape difficulty as to the supply of food for the sick man this doctor's good intentions came to nought. A Portuguese doctor here also gave his serious attention to the sleeping sickness, and it was reported that he had found a cure for it in some part of a fresh billy-goat. This good man wanted a special hospital to be built for him and a subsidy so that he might devote himself to the task he had undertaken. His Government, however, although its hospitals are far in advance of those of its neighbours on the Coast, could not see its way to erect such a place."

All I need add to this is that I was informed that the disease when it had once definitely set in ran its fatal course in a year, but that when it came as an epidemic it was more rapidly fatal, sometimes only a matter of a few weeks, and it was this more acute form that was

accompanied by wild delirium. Another native informant told me when it was bad it usually lasted only from twenty to forty days.

Monteiro says the sleep disease was unknown south of the Congo until it suddenly attacked the town of Musserra, where he was told by the natives as many as 200 died of it in a few months. This was in 1870, and curious to say it did not spread to the neighbouring towns. Monteiro induced the natives to remove from the old town, and the mortality decreased till the disease died out. "There was nothing in the old town to account for this sudden singular epidemic. It was beautifully clean and well-built on high dry ground, surrounded by mandioca plantations, the last place to all appearance to expect such a curious outbreak."[1]

Monteiro also observes that "there is no cure known for it," but he is speaking for Angola, and I think this strengthens his statement that it is a comparatively recent importation there. For certainly there are cures, if not known, at any rate believed in, for the sleeping sickness in its own home Kakongo and Loango. There is a great difference in the diseases, flora and fauna, of the north and south banks of the Congo—whether owing to the difficulty of crossing the terrifically rapid and powerful stream of the great river I do not know. Still there was—more in former times than now—much intercourse between the natives of the two banks when the Portuguese discovered the Congo in 1487. The town called now San Antonio was the throne town of the kingdom of Kongo, and had nominally as provinces the two districts Kakongo and Loango, these provinces that are now the head centres of the sleep disease. Yet in the early accounts given of Kongo by the Catholic missionaries, who lived in Kongo among the natives, I have so far found no mention of the sleep disease. It is impossible to believe that Merolla, for example, could have avoided mentioning it if he had seen or heard of it. Merolla's style of giving information was, like my own, diffuse. Certainly we must remember that these Catholic

[1] *Angola and the River Congo.* Macmillan. Vol. i., p. 144.

missionaries were not much in Loango and Kakongo, as those provinces had broken almost entirely away from the Kongo throne prior to the Portuguese arrival, so perhaps all we can safely say is that in the 15—17th centuries there was no sleep disease in the districts on the south bank of the Congo, and it was not anything like so notoriously bad in the districts on the north bank.

Before quitting the apothecary part of this affair, I may just remark that if you, being white, of a nervous disposition, and merely in possession of an ordinary amount of medical knowledge, find yourself called in to doctor an African friend or acquaintance, you must be careful about hot poultices. I should say, *never* prescribe hot poultices. An esteemed medical friend, since dead, told me that when he first commenced practice in West Africa he said to a civilised native who was looking after his brother—the patient—"Give him a linseed poultice made like this"—demonstration—"and mind he has it hot." The man came back shortly afterwards to say his brother had been very sick, but was no better, though every bit of the stuff had been swallowed so hot it had burnt his mouth. But swallowing the poultice is a minor danger to its exhibition. Even if you yourself see it put on outside, carefully, exactly where that poultice ought to be, the moment your back is turned the patient feeling hot gets into the most awful draught he can find, or into cold water, and the consequences are inflammation of the lungs and death, and you get the credit of it. The natives themselves you will find are very clever at doctoring in their own way, by no means entirely depending on magic and spells; and you will also find they have a strong predilection for blisters, cupping and bleeding, hot water and emetics; in all their ailments, and on the whole it suits them very well. Therefore I pray you add your medical knowledge and your special drugs to theirs, and for outside applications stick to blisters in place of hot poultices.

CHAPTER IX

THE WITCH DOCTOR

African Medicine mainly from the point of view of the Witch Doctor.

WE will now leave the village apothecary and his methods, and turn to the witch doctor, the consulting physician. He of course knows all about the therapeutic action of low-grade spirits, such as dwell in herbs and so on; but he knows more—namely the actions of higher spirits on the human soul, and the disorders of the human soul into the bargain.

The dogma that rules his practice is that in all cases of disease in which no blood is showing, the patient is suffering from something wrong in the soul. In order to lay this dogma fairly before you, I should here discourse on the nature of spirits unallied to the human soul—non-human spirits—and the nature of the human spirit itself; but as on the one hand, I cannot be hasty on such an important group of subjects, and, on the other, I cannot expect you to be anything else in such a matter, I forbear, and merely beg to remark that the African does not believe in anything being soulless, he regards even matter itself as a form of soul, low, because not lively, a thing other spirit forms use as they please practically as the garment of the spirit that uses it. This conception is, as far as I know, constant in both Negro and Bantu. I will therefore here deal only with what

the African regards as merely one class of spirits—an important class truly, but above it there are at least two more important classes, while beneath it in grade there are, I think, about eleven, and equal to it, but differing in nature, several classes—I don't exactly know how many. This class of spirits is the human soul—the *Kla* of the true Negro, the *Mzun* of the Bantu. These human souls are also of different grades, for one sort is believed to be existent before birth, as well as during life and after death, while other classes are not. There is more interesting stuff here, but I am determined to stick to my main point now—the medical. Well, the number of souls possessed by each individual we call a human being is usually held to be four—(1) the soul that survives, (2) the soul that lives in an animal away wild in the bush, (3) the shadow cast by the body, (4) the soul that acts in dreams. I believe that the more profound black thinkers hold that these last-named souls are only functions of the true soul, but from the witch doctor's point of view there are four, and he acts on this opinion when doctoring the diseases that afflict these souls of a man.

The dream-soul is the cause of woes unnumbered to our African friend, and the thing that most frequently converts him into that desirable state, from a witch doctor's point of view of a patient. It is this way. The dream-soul is, to put it very mildly, a silly flighty thing. Off it goes when its owner is taking a nap, and gets so taken up with sky-larking, fighting, or gossiping with other dream-souls that sometimes it does not come home to its owner when he is waking up. So, if any one has to wake a man up great care must always be taken that it is done softly—softly, namely gradually and quietly, so as to give the dream-soul time to come home. For if either of the four souls of a man have their intercommunication broken, the human being possessing them gets very ill. We will take an example. A man has been suddenly roused by some cause or other before that dream-soul has had time to get into quarters. That human being feels very ill, and sends for the witch

doctor. The medical man diagnoses the case as one of absence of dream-soul, instantly claps a cloth over the mouth and nose, and gets his assistant to hold it there until the patient gets hard on suffocated ; but no matter, it's the proper course of treatment to pursue. The witch doctor himself gets ready, as rapidly as possible another dream-soul, which if he is a careful medical man, he has brought with him in a basket. Then the patient is laid on his back and the cloths removed from the mouth and nose, and the witch doctor holds over them his hands containing the fresh soul, blowing hard at it so as to get it well into the patient. If this is successfully accomplished, the patient recovers. Occasionally, however, this fresh soul slips through the medical man's fingers, and before you can say "Knife" is on top of some 100-feet-high or more silk cotton tree, where it chirrups gaily and distinctly. This is a great nuisance. The patient has to be promptly covered up again. If the doctor has an assistant with him, that unfortunate individual has to go up the tree and catch the dream-soul. If he has no assistant, he has to send his power up the tree after the truant ; doctors who are in full practice have generally passed the time of life when climbing up trees personally is agreeable. When, however, the thing has been re-captured and a second attempt to insert it is about to be made, it is held advisable to get the patient's friends and relatives to stand round him in a ring and howl lustily, while your assistant also howling lustily, but in a professional manner, beats a drum. This prevents the soul from bolting again, and tends to frighten it into the patient.

In some obstinate cases of loss of dream-soul, however, the most experienced medical man will fail to get the fresh soul inserted. It clings to his fingers, it whisks back into the basket or into his hair or clothes, and it chirrups dismally, and the patient becomes convulsed. This is a grave symptom, but the diagnosis is quite clear. The patient has got a *sisa* in him, so there is no room for the fresh soul.

Now, a *sisa* is a dreadful bad thing for a man to

have in him, and an expensive thing to get out. It is the surviving soul of a person who has not been properly buried—not had his devil made, in fact. And as every human surviving soul has a certain allotted time of existence in a human body before it can learn the dark and difficult way down to Srahmandazi, if by mischance the body gets killed off before the time is up, that soul unless properly buried and sent on the way to Srahmandazi, or any other Hades, under expert instruction given as to the path for the dead, becomes a *sisa*, and has to hang about for the remaining years of its term of bodily life.

These *ensisa* are held to be so wretchedly uncomfortable in this state that their tempers become perfect wrecks, and they grow utterly malignant, continually trying to get into a human body, so as to finish their term more comfortably. Now, a *sisa's* chief chance of getting into a body is in whipping in when there is a hole in a man's soul chamber, from the absence of his own dream-soul. If a *sisa* were a quiet, respectable soul that would settle down, it would not matter much, for the dream-soul it supplants is not of much account. But a *sisa* is not. At the best, it would only live out its remaining term, and then go off the moment that term was up, and most likely kill the souls it had been sheltering with by bolting at an inconvenient moment. This was the verdict given on the death of a man I knew who, from what you would call faintness, fell down in a swamp and was suffocated. Inconvenient as this is, the far greater danger you are exposed to by having a *sisa* in you lies in the chances being 10 to 1 that it is stained with blood, for, without being hard on these unfortunate unburied souls, I may remark that respectable souls usually get respectably buried, and so don't become *ensisa*. This blood which is upon it the devils that are around smell and go for, as is the nature of devils; and these devils whip in after the *sisa* soul into his host in squads, and the man with such a set inside him is naturally very ill—convulsions, delirium, high temperature, &c., and the indications to your true witch doctor

are that that *sisa* must be extracted before a new dream-soul can be inserted and the man recover.

But getting out a *sisa* is a most trying operation. Not only does it necessitate a witch doctor sending in his power to fetch it *vi et armis*, it also places the medical man in a position of grave responsibility regarding its disposal when secured. The methods he employs to meet this may be regarded as akin to those of antiseptic surgery. All the people in the village, particularly babies and old people—people whose souls are delicate—must be kept awake during the operation, and have a piece of cloth over the nose and mouth, and every one must howl so as to scare the *sisa* off them, if by mischance it should escape from the witch doctor. An efficient practitioner, I may remark, thinks it a great disgrace to allow a *sisa* to escape from him; and such an accident would be a grave blow to his practice, for people would not care to call in a man who was liable to have this occur. However, our present medical man having got the *sisa* out, he has still to deal with the question of its disposal before he can do anything more. The assistant blows a new dream-soul into the patient, and his women see to him; but the witch doctor just holds on to the *sisa* like a bulldog.

Sometimes the disposal of the *sisa* has been decided on prior to its extraction. If the patient's family are sufficiently well off, they agree to pay the doctor enough to enable him to teach the *sisa* the way to Hades. Indeed, this is the course respectable medical men always insist on, although it is expensive to the patient's family. But there are, I regret to say, a good many unprincipled witch doctors about who will undertake a case cheap.

They will carry off with them the extracted *sisa* for a small fee, then shortly afterwards a baby in the village goes off in tetanic convulsions. No one takes much notice of that, because it's a way babies have. Soon another baby is born in the same family—polygamy being prevalent, the event may occur after a short interval—well, after giving the usual anxiety and expense, that baby goes off in convulsions. Suspicion is aroused.

Presently yet another baby appears in the family, keeps all right for a week may be, and then also goes off in convulsions. Suspicions are confirmed. The worm—the father, I mean—turns, and he takes the body of that third baby and smashes one of its leg bones before it is thrown away into the bush; for he knows he has got a wanderer soul—namely, a *sisa*, which some unprincipled practitioner has sent into his family. He just breaks the leg so as to warn the soul he is not a man to be trifled with, and will not have his family kept in a state of perpetual uproar and expense. It sometimes happens, however, in spite of this that, when his fourth baby arrives, that too goes off in convulsions. Thoroughly roused now, paterfamilias sternly takes a chopper and chops that infant's remains up extremely small, and it is scattered broadcast. Then he holds he has eliminated that *sisa* from his family finally.

I am informed, however, that the fourth baby to arrive in a family afflicted by a *sisa* does not usually go off in convulsions, but that fairly frequently it is born lame, which shows that it is that wanderer soul back with its damaged leg. It is not treated unkindly but not taken much care of, and so rarely lives many years—from the fetish point of view, of course, only those years remaining of its term of bodily life out of which some witchcraft of man or some vengeance of a god cheated it.

If I mention the facts that when a man wakes up in the morning feeling very stiff and with "that tired feeling" you see mentioned in advertisements in the newspapers, he holds that it arises from his own dream-soul having been out fighting and got itself bruised; and that if he wakes up in a fright, he will jump up and fire off his gun, holding that a pack of rag-tag devils have been chasing his soul home and wishing to scare them off, I think I may leave the complaints of the dream-soul connected with physic and pass on to those connected with surgery.

Now, devoted as I am to my West African friends, I am bound in the interests of Truth to say that many of them are sadly unprincipled. There are many witches,

not witch doctors, remember, who make it a constant practice to set traps for dream-souls. Witches you will find from Sierra Leone to Cameroons, but they are extra prevalent on the Gold Coast and in Calabar.

These traps are usually pots containing something attractive to the soul, and in this bait are concealed knives or fish-hooks—fish-hooks when the witch wants to catch the soul to keep, knives when the desire is just to injure it.

In the case of the lacerated dream-soul, when it returns to its owner, it makes him feel very unwell; but the symptoms are quite different from those arising from loss of the dream-soul or from a *sisa*.

The reason for catching dream-souls with hooks is usually a low mercenary one. You see, many patients insist on having their own dream-soul put back into them —they don't want a substitute from the doctor's store— so of course the soul has to be bought from the witch who has got it. Sometimes, however, the witch is the hireling of some one intent on injuring a particular person and keen on capturing the soul for this purpose, though too frightened to kill his enemy outright. So the soul is not only caught and kept, but tortured, hung up over the canoe fire and so on, and thus, even if the patient has another dream-soul put in, so long as his original soul is in the hands of a torturer, he is uncomfortable.

On one occasion, for example, I heard one of the Kruboys who were with me making more row in his sleep, more resounding slaps and snores and grunts than even a normal Kruboy does, and, resolving in my mind that what that young man really required was one of my pet pills, I went to see him. I found him asleep under a thick blanket and with a handkerchief tied over his face. It was a hot night, and the man and his blanket were as wet with sweat as if they had been dragged through a river. I suggested to the head-man that the handkerchief muzzle should come off, and was informed by him that for several nights previously the man had dreamt of that savoury dish, crawfish seasoned with red pepper. He

had become anxious, and consulted the head-man, who decided that undoubtedly some witch was setting a trap for his dream-soul with this bait, with intent, &c. Care was now being taken to, as it were, keep the dream-soul at home. I of course did not interfere, and the patient completely recovered.

We will now pass on to diseases arising from disorders in the other three souls of a man. The immortal or surviving soul is liable to a disease that its body suffered from during its previous time on earth, born again with it. Such diseases are quite incurable, and I only personally know of them in the Calabar and Niger Delta, where reincarnation is strongly believed in.

Then come the diseases that arise from injury to the shadow-soul. It strikes one as strange at first to see men who have been walking, say, through forest or grass land on a blazing hot morning quite happily, on arrival at a piece of clear ground or a village square, most carefully go round it, not across, and you will soon notice that they only do this at noontime, and learn that they fear losing their shadow. I asked some Bakwiri I once came across who were particularly careful in this matter, why they were not anxious about losing their shadows when night came down and they disappeared in the surrounding darkness, and was told that that was all right, because at night all shadows lay down in the shadow of the Great God, and so got stronger. Had I not seen how strong and long a shadow, be it of man or tree or of the great mountain itself, was in the early morning time? Ah me! I said, the proverb is true that says the turtle can teach the spider. I never thought of that.

Murders are sometimes committed by secretly driving a nail or knife into a man's shadow, and so on; but if the murderer be caught red-handed at it, he or she would be forthwith killed, for all diseases arising from the shadow-soul are incurable. No man's shadow is like that of his own brother, says the proverb.

Now we come to that very grave class of diseases which arise from disorders of the bush-soul. These

diseases are not all incurable, nevertheless they are very intractable and expensive to cure. This bush-soul is, as I have said, resident in some wild animal in the forest. It may be in only an earth pig, or it may be in a leopard, and, quite providentially for the medical profession no layman can see his own soul—it is not as if it were connected with all earth pigs, or all leopards, as the case may be, but it is in one particular earth pig or leopard or other animal—so recourse must be had to medical aid when anything goes wrong with it. It is usually in the temper that the bush-soul suffers. It is liable to get a sort of aggrieved neglected feeling, and want things given it. When you wander about the wild gloomy forests of the Calabar region, you will now and again come across, far away from all human habitation or plantation, tiny huts, under whose shelter lies some offering or its remains. Those are offerings administered by direction of a witch doctor to appease a bush-soul. For not only can a witch doctor see what particular animal a man's bush-soul is in, but he can also see whereabouts in the forest that animal is. Still, these bush-souls are not easily appeased. The worst of it is that a man may be himself a quiet steady man, careful of his diet and devoted to a whole skin, and yet his bush-soul be a reckless blade, scorning danger, and thereby getting itself shot by some hunter or killed in a trap or pit; and if his bush-soul dies, the man it is connected with dies. Therefore if the hunter who has killed it can be found out—a thing a witch doctor cannot do unless he happens by chance to have had his professional eye on that bush-soul at the time of the catastrophe; because, as it were, at death the bush-soul ceases to exist—that hunter has to pay compensation to the family of the deceased. On the other hand, if the man belonging to the bush-soul dies, the bush-soul animal has to die too. It rushes to and fro in the forest—"can no longer find a good place." If it sees a fire, it rushes into that; if it sees a lot of hunters, it rushes among them—anyhow, it gets itself killed off.

M

We will now turn our attention to that other great division of diseases—namely such as are caused only and directly by human agency. Those I have already detained you too long over are caused by spirits acting on their own account, for even in the case of the trapped dream-souls they are held themselves to have shown contributory negligence in getting hooked or cut in traps.

The others arise from what is called witchcraft. You will often hear it said that the general idea among savage races is that death always arises from witchcraft; but I think, from what I have said regarding diseases arising from bush-souls' bad tempers, from contracting a *sisa*, from losing the shadow at high noon, and from, it may be, other causes I have not spoken of, that this generalisation is for West Africa too sweeping. But undoubtedly sixty per cent of the deaths are believed to arise from witchcraft. I would put the percentage higher, were it not for the terrible mortality from tetanus among children, which sometimes is and sometimes is not put down to witchcraft, and the mortality from smallpox and the sleep disease down south in Loango and Kakongo, those diseases not being in any case that I have had personal acquaintance with imputed to witchcraft at all. Indeed I venture to think that any disease that takes an epidemic form is regarded as a scourge sent by some great outraged nature spirit not a mere human dabbler in devils. I have dealt with witchcraft itself elsewhere, therefore now I only speak regarding it medically; and I think, roughly speaking, not absolutely, mind you, that the witching something *out* of a man is the most common iniquity of witchcraft from Cape Juby to Cameroons, the region of the true Negro stock; while from Cameroons to Benguella—the limit of my knowledge to the south on the western side of the continent—the most common iniquity of witchcraft is witching something into him. As in the diseases arising from the loss of the dream-soul I have briefly dealt with the witching something out, I now turn to the witching something in.

I well remember, in 1893, being then new to and easily alarmed by the West Coast, going into a village in Kakongo one afternoon and seeing several unpleasant-looking objects stuck on poles. Investigation showed they were the lungs, livers, or spleens of human beings; and local information stated that they were the powers of witches—witches that had been killed, and on examination found to have inside them these things, dangerous to the state and society at large. Hence it was the custom to stick these things up on poles as warnings to the general public not to harbour in their individual interiors things to use against their fellow creatures. They mutely but firmly said—"See! if you turn witch, your inside will be stuck on a pole."

I may remark that in many districts of the South-West coast and middle Congo it is customary when a person dies in an unexplainable way, namely without shedding blood, to hold a post-mortem. In some cases the post-mortem discloses the path of the witch through the victim—usually, I am informed, the injected witch feeds on the victim's lungs—in other cases the post-mortem discloses the witch power itself, demonstrating that the deceased was a keeper of witch power, or, as we should say, a witch.

Once when I was at Batanga a woman dropped down on the beach and died. The usual post-mortem was held, and local feeling ran high. "She no complain, she no say nothing, and then she go die one time." The post-mortem disclosed what I think you would term a ruptured aneurism of the aorta, but the local verdict was "she done witch herself"—namely that she was a witch, who had been eaten by her own power, therefore there were great rejoicings over her death.

This dire catastrophe is, however, liable to overtake legitimate medical men. All reasonable people in every clime allow a certain latitude to doctors. They are supposed to know things other people need not, and to do things, like dissections and such, that other people should not, and no one thinks any the worse of them. This is the case with the African physician, whom we

roughly call the witch doctor, but whose full title is the combatant of the evils worked by witches and devils on human souls and human property. This medical man has, from the exigencies of his profession, to keep in his own inside a power, and a good strong one at that, which he can employ in his practice by sending it into patients to fetch out other witch powers, *sisas*, or any miscellaneous kind of devil that may have got into them. His position is totally different from that of the layman. He is known to possess a witch power, and the knowledge of how to employ it; but instead of this making him an object of aversion to his fellow-men, it secures for him esteem and honour, and the more terrifically powerful his power is known to be, the more respect he gains; for suppose you were taken ill by a real bad devil, you would prefer a medical man whose power was at least up to that devil's fighting weight.

Nevertheless his having to keep the dangerous devil in his own inside exposes the witch doctor to grave personal danger, for if, from a particularly healthy season, or some notorious quack coming into his district, his practice falls off, and his power is thereby not kept fed, that unfortunate man is liable to be attacked by it. This was given me as the cause of the death of a great doctor in the Chiloango district, and I heard the same thing from the Ncomi district, so it is clear that many eminent men are cut off in the midst of their professional career in this way.

As for what this power is like in its corporal form, I can only say that it is evidently various. One witch doctor I know just to the north of Loango always made it a practice to give his patients a brisk emetic as soon as he was called in, and he always found young crocodiles in the consequences. I remember seeing him in one case secure six lively young crocodiles that had apparently been very recently hatched. These were witch powers. Again, I was informed of a witch who was killed near the Bungo River having had found inside him a thing like a lizard, but with wings like a bat. The most peculiar form of witch power I have heard of as being found

inside a patient was on the Ogowé from two native friends, both of them very intelligent, reliable men, one of them a Bible reader. They said that about two years previously a relation of theirs had been badly witched. A doctor had been called in, who administered an emetic, and there appeared upon the scene a strange little animal that grew with visible rapidity. An hour after its coming to light it crawled and got out of the basin, and finally it flew away. It had bat's wings and a body and tail like a lizard. This catawampus, my informant held, had been witched into the man when it was "small, small" —namely, very small. It might, they thought, have been given to their relation in some food or drink by an enemy, but for sure, if it had not been disturbed by that emetic, it would have grown up inside the man and have eaten its way out through his vitals.

From the whole of the above statements I think I have shown you that if as a witch doctor you are called in to a patient who is ill, but who is not showing blood anywhere, your diagnosis will be that he has got some sort or another of devil the matter with him, and that the first indication is to find out who put that devil in, because, in the majority of cases, until you know this you can't get it out; the second is to get it out; the third is to prevent its getting adrift, and into some one else.

I have only briefly sketched the ideas and methods of witch doctors in West Africa, in so far as treatment is concerned. The infinite variety of methods employed in detecting who has been the witch in a given case; the infinite variety of incantations and so on, I have no space to dwell on here, and will conclude by giving you a general sketch of the career of a witch doctor.

We will start with the medical student stage. Now, every West African tribe has a secret society—two, in fact, one for men and one for women. Every free man has to pass through the secret society of his tribe. If during this education the elders of this society discover that a boy is what is called in Calabar an *ebumtup*—a person who can see spirits—the elders of the society advise that he should be brought up to the medical

profession. Their advice is generally taken, and the boy is apprenticed as it were to a witch doctor, who requires a good fee with him. This done, he proceeds with his studies, learns the difference between the dream-soul basket and the one *sisas* are kept in—a mistake between the two would be on a par with mistaking oxalic acid for Epsom salts. He is then taught how to howl in a professional way, and, by watching his professor, picks up his bedside manner. If he can acquire a showy way of having imitation epileptic fits, so much the better. In fact, as a medical student, you have to learn pretty well as much there as here. You must know the dispositions, the financial position, little scandals, &c., of the inhabitants of the whole district, for these things are of undoubted use in divination and the finding of witches, and in addition you must be able skilfully to dispense charms, and know what babies say before their own mothers can. Then some day your professor and instructor dies, his own professional power eats him, or he tackles a disease-causing spirit that is one too many for him, and on you descend his paraphernalia and his practice.

It is usual for a witch-doctor to acquire for his power a member of one of the higher grade spirit classes—he does not acquire a human soul—and his successor usually, I think, takes the same spirit, or, at any rate, a member of the same class. This does not altogether limit you as a successor to a certain line of practice, but, as no one spirit can do all things, it tends to make you a specialist. I know a district where, if any one wanted a canoe charm, they went to one medical man; if a charm to keep thieves off their plantation, to another.

This brings us to the practice itself, and it may be divided into two divisions. First, prophylactic methods, namely, making charms to protect your patients' wives, children, goats, plantations, canoes, &c., from damage, houses from fire, &c. &c., and to protect the patient himself from wild animals and all danger by land or water. This is a very paying part, but full of anxiety. For example, put yourself in the place of a Mpongwe

medical friend of mine. You have with much trouble got a really valuable spirit to come into a paste made of blood and divers things, and having made it into a sausage form, and done it round with fibre wonderfully neatly, you have painted it red outside to please the spirits—because spirits like red, they think it's blood. Well, in a week or so, the man you administered it to comes back and says "that thing's no good." His paddle has broken more often than before he had the thing. The amount of rocks, and floating trees, to say nothing of snags, is, he should say, about double the normal, whereby he has lost a whole canoe load of European goods, and, in short, he doesn't think much of you as a charm maker. Then he expectorates and sulks offensively. You take the charm, and tell him it was a perfectly good one when you gave it him, and you never had any complaints before, but you will see what has gone wrong with it. Investigation shows you that the spirit is either dead or absent. In the first case it has been killed by a stronger spirit of its own class; in the second lured away by bribery. Now this clearly points to your patient's having a dangerous and powerful enemy, and you point it out to him and advise him to have a fresh and more powerful charm—necessarily more expensive—with as little delay as possible. He grumbles, but, realising the danger, pays up, and you make him another. The old one can be thrown away, like an empty pill-box.

The other part of your practice—the clinical—consists in combating those witches who are always up to something—sucking blood of young children, putting fearful wild fowl into people to eat up their most valued viscera, or stealing souls o' nights, blighting crops, &c.

Therefore you see the witch doctor's life is not an idle one; he has not merely to humbug the public and pocket the fees—or I should say "bag," pockets being rare in this region—but he works very hard, and has his anxieties just like a white medical man. The souls that get away from him are a great worry. The death of every patient is a danger to a certain extent, because the

patient's soul will be vicious to him until it is buried. But I must say I profoundly admire our West African witch doctors for their theory of *sins* as an explanation of their not always being able to insert a new soul into a patient, for by this theory they save themselves somewhat, and do not entail on themselves the treatment their brother medicos have to go through on the Nass River in British Columbia. According to Mr. Frazer, in that benighted Nass River district those native American doctors hold it possible that a doctor may swallow a patient's soul by mistake. This is their theory to account for the strange phenomenon of a patient getting worse instead of better when a doctor has been called in, and so the unfortunate doctor who has had this accident occur is made to stand over his patient while another medical man thrusts his fingers in his throat, another kneads him in the abdomen, and a third medical brother slaps him on the back. All the doctors present have to go through the same ordeal, and if the missing soul does not turn up the party of doctors go to the head doctor's house to see if by chance he has got it in his box. All the things are taken out of the box, and if the soul is not there, the head doctor, the President of the College of Physicians, the Sir Somebody Something of the district, is held by his heels with his learned head in a hole in the floor, while the other doctors wash his hair. The water used is then taken and poured over the patient's head.

I told this story to all the African witch doctors I knew. I fear, that being hazy in geography, they think it is the practice of the English medical profession; but, anyhow every one of them regarded the doctors of the Nass River as a set of superstitious savages, and imbeciles at that. Of course a medical man had to see to souls, but to go about in squads, administer rough emetics to themselves, instead of to the patients, and as for that head washing—well, people can be fool too much! None of them showed the slightest signs of adopting the British Columbia method, none of them showed even any signs of adopting my suggestion that

they should go and teach those benighted brothers of theirs the theory of *insisa*.

If you ask me frankly whether I think these African witch doctors believe in themselves, I think I must say, Yes; or perhaps it would be safer to say they believe in the theory they work by, for of that there can be very little doubt. I do not fancy they ever claim invincible power over disease; they do their best according to their lights. It would be difficult to see why they should doubt their own methods, because, remember, all their patients do not die; the majority recover. I am not putting this recovery down to their soul-treatment method, but to the village apothecary, who has usually been doctoring the patient with drugs before the so-called witch doctor is called in. Of course the apothecary does not get the credit of the cure in this case, but I fancy he deserves it. Another point to be remembered is that the Africans on the West Coast, at any rate, are far more liable than white men to many strange nervous disorders, especially to delirium, which often occurs in a comparatively slight illness. Why I do not pretend to understand; but I think in these nervous cases the bedside manners of a witch doctor—though strongly resembling that of the physician who attended the immortal Why Why's mother—may yet be really useful.

As to the evil these witch doctors do in the matter of getting people killed for bewitching it is difficult to speak justly. I fancy that, on the whole, they do more good than harm, for remember witchcraft in these districts is no parlour game; in the eyes of Allah as well as man it is murder, for most of it is poison. Most witchcraft charms I know of among people who have not been in contact with Mohammedanism have always had that element of mixing something with the food or drink—even in that common, true Negro form of killing by witchcraft, putting medicine in the path, there is a poisoned spike as well as charm stuff. There can be no doubt that the witch doctor's methods of finding out who has poisoned a person are effective, and that the knowledge in the public mind of this detective power

keeps down poisoning to a great extent. Of the safeguards against unjust accusation I will speak when treating of law.

As to their using hypnotism, I suppose they do use something of the sort at times. West Indians, with whom I was always anxious to talk on the differences and agreements between Voudou and Obeah and their parent West African religion, certainly, in their description of what they called Wanga—and translated as Glamour—seemed to point to this; but for myself, save in the case of blood coming before, one case of which I witnessed, I have seen nothing beyond an enormously elaborated common sense. I dare not call it sound, because it is based on and developed out of animism, and of that and our white elaborated view I am not the judge, remembering you go the one way, I the other—which is the best, God knows.

CHAPTER X

EARLY TRADE IN WEST AFRICA

Concerning the accounts given by classic writers of West Africa, and of the method of barter called the Silent Trade.

IT is a generally received opinion that there are too many books in the world already. I cannot, however, subscribe to any Institution that proposes to alter this state of affairs, because I find no consensus of opinion as to which are the superfluous books; I have my own opinion on the point, but I feel I had better keep it to myself, for I find the very books I dislike—almost invariably in one-volume form, as this one is, though of a more connected nature than this is likely to be—are the well-beloved of thousands of my fellow human beings; and so I will restrict my enthusiasms in the matter of books to the cause of attempting to incite writers to give us more. If any one wants personally to oblige me he will forthwith write a masterly history of the inter-relationships—religious, commercial, and cultural—of the other races of the earth with the African, and he can put in as an appendix a sketch of the war conquest of Africa by the white races. I do not ask for a separate volume on this, because there will be so many on the others; moreover, it is such a kaleidoscopic affair, and its influence alike on both European, Asiatic, and African seems to me neither great nor good.

For the past fifteen years I have been reading up Africa; and the effect of the study of this literature may best be summarised in Mr. Kipling's observation, "For to admire an' for to see, For to be'old this world so wide, It's never been no good to me, But I can't drop it if I tried." Wherein it has failed to be of good, I hastily remark, is that after all this fifteen years' reading, I found I had to go down into the most unfashionable part of Africa myself, to try to find out whatever the thing was really like, and also to discover which of my authors had been doing the heaviest amount of lying. It seemed clear to the meanest intelligence that this form of the darkening of counsel was fearfully prevalent among them, because of the way they disagreed about things among themselves. Of course I have so far only partially succeeded in both these matters; for, regarding the first, personal experience taught me that things differed with district; regarding the second, that all the people who have been to Africa and have written books on it have, off and on, told the truth, and that what seemed to the public who have not been there to be the most erroneous statements have been true in substance and in fact, and that those statements they have accepted immediately as true on account of their either flattering their vanity or comfortably explaining the reasons of the failure of their endeavours, have the most falsehood in them.

There is another point I must mention regarding this material for that much wanted colossal work on the history of African relationships with the rest of the world —which I do not intend to write, but want written for me—and that is the superiority both in quality and quantity of the portion which relates to the Early History of the West Coast. Yet very little attention has been given in our own times to this. I might say no attention, were it not for Sir A. B. Ellis, that very noble man and gallant soldier, who did so much good work for England both with sword and pen. Just for the sake of the work being worth doing, not in the hope of reward; for twenty years' service and the publi-

cation of a series of books of great interest and importance taught him that West Africa was under a ban that it was beyond his power to remove; nevertheless he went on with his work unfaltering, if not uncomplaining, and died, in 1895, a young man, practically killed by the Warim incident—the true history of which has yet to be written. For the credit of my country, I must say that just before death he was knighted.

I do not quote Colonel Ellis's works extensively, because, for one thing, it is the duty of people to read them firsthand, and as they are perfectly accessible there is no excuse for their not doing so; and, for another thing, I am in touch with the majority of the works from which he gathered his information regarding the early history, and with the natives from whom he gathered his ethnological information. There are certain points, I grant, on which I am unable to agree with him, such as the opinion he formed from his personal prejudices against the traders in West Africa; but in the main, regarding the regions with which he was personally acquainted and on which he wrote—the Bight of Benin regions—I am only too glad that there is Colonel Ellis for me to agree with.

The fascination of West Africa's historical record is very great, bristling as it does with the deeds of brave men, bad and good, black and white. What my German friends would call the Blüth-period of this history is decidedly that period which was inaugurated by the great Prince Henry the Navigator; and no man who has ever read, as every man should read, Mr. Major's book on Prince Henry, can fail to want to know more still, and what happened down in those re-discovered Bights of Benin and Biafra after this Blüth-period closed. This can be done, mainly thanks to a Dutchman named Bosman, who was agent for the great Dutch house of the Gold Coast for many years circa 1698, and who wrote home to his uncle a series of letters of a most exemplary nature reeking with information on native matters and local politics, and suffused with a tender fear of shocking his aunt which did not, however, seem

in his opinion to justify him in suppressing important ethnological facts.

Regarding the ethnological information we have of the Gold Coast natives, the most important works are those by the late Sir A. B. Ellis. His books are almost models of what books should be that are written by people studying native customs in their native land. We have also the results of scientific observers in the works of Buckhardt and Bastian, besides a mass of scattered information in the works of travellers, Bosman, Barbot, Labat, Mathews, Bowditch, Cruickshank, Winwood Reade, H. M. Stanley, Burton, Captain Canot, Captain Binger, and others, and quite recently a valuable contribution to our knowledge in Mr. Sarbar's *Fanti Customary Laws*.[1] I think that every student of the African form of thought should master these works thoroughly, and I fully grant their great importance; but nevertheless, I am quite unable to agree with Mr. Jevons (*Introduction to the History of Religion*, p. 164) when he says, regarding Fetishism, that "it is certainly amongst the inhabitants of the Gold and Slave Coasts that the subject can best be studied." These two Coasts are, I grant, the best place for a student who is resident in Europe, and therefore dependent on the accounts given by others of the things he is dealing with, to draw his information from, because of the accuracy and extent of the information he can get from Ellis's work; but, apart from Ellis the value of these regions to an ethnologist is but small, and for an ethnologist who will go out to West Africa and study his material for himself, the whole of the Coast regions of the Benin Bight are but of tenth-rate importance, because of the great and long-continued infusion of both Mohammedan and European forms of thought into the original native thought-form that has taken place in these regions. This subject I will refer to later, and I will return now to the history, confining myself to the earlier portions of it, and to that which bears on the early development of trade.

[1] Clowes and Sons, 1897.

I sincerely wish I could go into full details regarding the whole history of the locality here, because I know my only chance of being allowed to do so is on paper, and it would be a great relief to my mind; but I forbear, experience having taught me that the subject, to put it mildly, is not of general interest. For example, person after person have I tried to illuminate and educate in the matter of our relationships with the Ashantees; always, alas, in vain. Before I have got half through they "hear a voice I cannot hear that's calling them away;" or remember something "that must be done at once;" or, worst of all, go off straightway to sleep after once or twice feebly inquiring, "Where is that place?" Of course I am glad that my little knowledge has been the comfort it has to several people. Once, when I was homeward-bound along the Gold Coast, three gentlemen came on board very ill from fever, and homeward-bound, too. Their worst symptom was agonising insomnia. "Not a wink," they assured my friend the Irish purser, had they had "for a couple of months." "We'll soon put that right for you on board this boat," he said, in his characteristically kind and helpful manner. To my great surprise, that same afternoon he deliberately tackled me on the subject of the real reason that induced Osai Kwofi Kari Kari to cross the Prah in January, 1873. I was charmed at this unwonted display of interest in the subject, and hoped also to gain further information on it from those recently shipped Gold Coasters in the smoking-room. I was getting on fairly well with it; and my friend the purser, instead of having "some manifests to write out," as was usual with him, nobly battled with the intricacies of the subject for a good half hour and more; and then, just when I was in the middle of some topographical elucidation, accompanied by questions, up that purser rose, yawned and stretched himself, and hailed the doctor, who happened to be passing by. "What do you think of that, doctor?" he said, pointing to the settee. "Do them a power of good," says his compatriot the medico. Turning round, I saw the three victims of insomnia grouped together;

the middle man had his head pillowed on the oilclothed top of the table, and reclining, more or less gracefully, against him on either side were his two companions, their half-smoked pipes fallen from their limp fingers—all profoundly, unquestionably asleep. "Oh, yes! of course, I was delighted," but not flattered; and, warned by this incident, I will here only say that should any one be really interested in the eventful history of the long struggle between the English, Portuguese, French, Dutch, and Brandenburgers, with each other and with the natives, for the possession of the country where the black man's gold came from, they will find a good deal about it in the works already cited; and should any medical man—the remedy is perhaps a little too powerful to be trusted in the hands of the laity—require it for the treatment of insomnia as above indicated, I recommend that part of it which bears on the Ashantee question in small but regular doses.

Our earliest authorities mentioning Africa with the knowledge in them that it is surrounded by the ocean, save at Suez, are Theopompus and Herodotus. Unfortunately all Theopompus's works are lost to us, voluminous though they were, his history alone being a matter of fifty-eight volumes, while before he took up history he had won for himself a great reputation as an orator, during the reigns of Philip and Alexander the Great. He is perpetually referred to, however, though not always praised, by other great classical writers, Cicero, Pliny, the two Dionysiuses and others, and was evidently regarded as a great authority; one particular fragment of his works that refers to Africa is preserved by Ælian, and consists of a conversation between Silenus and Midas, King of Phrygia. Silenus says that Europe, Asia, and Africa are surrounded by the sea, but that beyond the known world there is an island of immense extent containing large animals and men of twice our stature. This island Mr. Major thinks and doubtless rightly, is connected with the tradition of our old friend—you know what I mean, as Captain Marryat's boatswain says—the Atlantis of Plato.

This affair I will no further mention or hint at, but hastily pass on to that other early authority, Herodotus, who was born 484 years before Christ, and whose works, thanks be, have survived. He says: "The Phœnician navigators under command of Pharaoh-Necho, King of Egypt, setting sail from the Red Sea, made their way to the Southern Sea; when autumn approached they drew their vessels to land, sowed a crop, waited until it was ripe for harvest, reaped it, and put again to sea." Having spent two years in this manner, in the third year they reached the Pillars of Hercules (Jebu Zatout, and Gibraltar), and returned to Egypt, "reporting," says Herodotus, "what does not find belief in me, but may perhaps in some other persons, for they said in sailing round Africa they had the sun to the right (to the North) of them. In this way was Libya first known."[1]

Much has been written regarding the accuracy of these Phœnician accounts; for, as frequently happens, their mention of a thing that seemed at first to brand their account as a lie remains to brand it as the truth—and although I have no doubt those Phœnician gentlemen heartily wished they had said nothing about having seen the sun to the North, yet it was best for them in the end, as it demonstrates to us that they had, at any rate, been South of the Equator; and we owe to Herodotus here, as in many other places in his works, a debt of gratitude for honestly putting down what he did not believe himself; he also has suffered from this habit of accuracy, becoming himself regarded by the superficial people of this world as a credulous old romancer, which he never was. Good man, he only liked fair play. "Here," he says as it were, "is a thing I am told. It's a bit too large for my belief hatch, but if you can get it down yours, you're free and welcome to ship it." Herodotus, however accepts the fact that Africa was surrounded by water, save at its connection with the great land mass of the earth (Europe and Asia) by the isthmus of Suez.

[1] *Melpomene*, IV. 41.

Several other attempts to circumnavigate Africa were made prior to Herodotus's writings. One that we have mention of[1] was made by a Persian nobleman named Sataspes, whom Xerxes had, for a then capital offence, condemned to impalement. This man's mother persuaded Xerxes that if she were allowed to deal with her son she would impose on him a more terrible punishment even than this, namely, that he should be condemned to sail round Libya. There is no doubt this good lady thought thereby to save her son; but, as events turned out, Xerxes, by accepting her suggestion, did not cheat justice by granting this as an alternative to immediate execution. However, off Sataspes sailed with a ship and crew from Egypt, out through the Pillars of Hercules, and doubling the Cape of Libya, then named Solois, he steered south, and, says Herodotus, "traversed a vast extent of sea for many months, and finding he had still more to pass he turned round and returned to Egypt and then back to Xerxes, who had him then impaled, because, for one thing he had not sailed round Libya, and for another, Xerxes held he lied about those regions of it that he had visited; for Sataspes said he had seen a nation of little men who wore garments made of palm leaves, who, whenever his crew drew their ships ashore, left their cities and flew into the mountains, though he did them no injury, only taking some cattle from them; and the reason he gave for his not sailing round Lybia was "that his ships could go no further." Sataspes's end was sad, but one cannot feel that he was a loss to the class of romancers of travel.

Another and a more determined navigator was Eudoxus of Cyzicus (B.C. 117). The scanty record we have of his exploration is of great interest. While he was making his stay in Alexandria, he met an Indian who was the sole survivor of a crew wrecked on the Red Sea Coast. He is the Indian who persuaded Ptolemy Euergetes to fit out an expedition to sail to India, and off they went and succeeded in it greatly, but on their

[1] *Melpomene*, IV. 43.

return the king seized the cargo; so therefore, as a private enterprise, the thing was a failure. However, Eudoxus was a man of great determination, and on the death of Ptolemy VII. in the reign of his successor, he set out on another expedition to India. On his return voyage he was driven down the African Coast and found there on the shore amongst other wreckage the prow of a vessel with the figure of a horse carved on it. This relic he took with him as a curiosity, and on his successful return to Alexandria exhibited it there in the market place, and during its exhibition it was recognised by some pirates from Cadiz (Gades) who happened to be in that city, and they testified that the small vessels which were employed in the fisheries along the West African Coast as far as the River Lixius (Wadi al Knos) always had the figure of a horse on their prows, and on this account were called "horses." The fact of this wreck of a vessel belonging to Western Europe being found on the East Coast of Africa, joined with the knowledge that these vessels did not pass through the Mediterranean Sea, gave Eudoxus the idea that the vessel he had the figure head of must have come round Africa from the West Coast, and he then proceeded to Cadiz and equipped three vessels, one large and two of smaller size, and started out to do the same thing, bar wrecking. He sailed down the known West Coast without trouble, but when he came to passing on into the unknown seas, he had trouble with the crews, and was compelled to beach his vessels. After doing this he succeeded in persuading his crews to proceed, but it was then found impossible to float the largest vessel, so she was abandoned, and the expedition proceeded in the smaller and in a ship constructed from the wreck of the larger on which the cargo was shipped with the expedition. Eudoxus reached apparently Senegambia, and then another mutiny broke out, and he had to return to Barbary. But undaunted he then fitted out another expedition, consisting of two smaller vessels, and once again sailed to the South to circumnavigate Africa. Nothing since

has been heard of Eudoxus of Cyzicus surnamed the Brave.[1]

On his second voyage he fell in with natives who, he says, spoke the same language that he had previously heard on the Eastern Coast of Africa. If he was right in this, some authors hold he must have gone down the West Coast, at least as far as Cameroons, because there you nowadays first strike the language, which does stretch across the continent, namely, the Bantu, and we have no reason to suppose that the Bantu border line was ever further North on this Coast than it is at present; indeed, the indications are, I think, the other way; but as far as the language goes, it seems to me that Eudoxus could have heard the same language as on the East African Coast far higher up than Cameroons, namely, on the Moroccoan Coast, for in those days, prior to the great Arab invasion, most likely the language of the Berber races had possession of Northern Africa from East Coast to West. However, there is another statement of his which I think points to Eudoxus having gone far South, namely, that the reason of his turning back was an inability to get provisions, for this catastrophe is not likely to have overtaken so brave a man as he was until he reached the great mangrove swamps of the Niger. The litoral of the Sahara was in those days, we may presume, from the accounts we have far later from Leo Africanus and Arab writers, more luxuriant and heavily populated than it is at present.

Of these voyages, however, we have such scant record that we need not dwell on them further, and so we will return to about 300 B.C., and consider the wonderful voyage made by Hanno of Carthage, of which we have more detailed knowledge; although there still remains a certain amount of doubt as to who exactly Hanno was, mainly on account of Hanno apparently having been to Carthage what Jones is to North Wales—the name

[1] See Ellis's *History of the Gold Coast*, also Tozer's *History of Ancient Geography*, Beazley's *Dawn of Modern Geography*, and *Strabo*, B.C. 25, book xvii, edited by Theodore Janssonius ab Almeloowen, Amsterdam, 1707.

of a number of individuals with a habit of doing everything and frequently distinguishing themselves greatly. The Carthaginians were to the classic world much what the English are to the modern, a great colonising, commercial people—warlike when wanted. They planted colonies in North Africa and elsewhere, and had commercial relationship with all the then known nations of the world, including a trans-Sahara trade with the people living to the South of the Great Desert. We shall never know to the full where those Carthaginians went, from the paucity of record; but we have record of the voyage of this Hanno in a *Periplus* originally written in the Punic language and then translated into Greek.[1] Hanno, it seems, was a chief magistrate at Carthage, and Pliny says his voyage was undertaken when Carthage was in a most flourishing condition.[2] From the *Periplus* we learn that the expedition to the West Coast consisted of sixty ships of fifty oars each, and 30,000 persons of both sexes, ample provisions and everything necessary for so great an undertaking. The object of this expedition was to explore, to found colonies, and to increase commerce. The expedition, after passing the Pillars of Hercules, sailed two days along the coast and founded their first colony, which they called Thymatirum. Just south of this place, on a

[1] There is doubt as to whether this *Periplus* is the entire one with which the classic writers were conversant.

[2] "Et Hanno Carthaginis potentia florente circumvectus a Gadibus ad finem Arabiae navigationem eam prodidit scripto"; (and Hanno, when Carthage flourished, sailed round from Cadiz to the remotest parts of Arabia, and left an account of his voyage in writing) Plinius, lib. ii. cap. lxvii. p.m. 220. See also lib. v. cap. i. p.m. 523, and Pomponius Mela, lib. iii. cap. ix. 63, edit. Isaici Vossii.

There is an English version of the *Periplus*, edited by Falconer, London, 1797; and an Oxford edition of it, and some other works, by Dr. Hudson, 1698. Also there is a work on Hanno's *Periplus* based on MS. in the Meyer Museum at Liverpool by Simonides, not the Iambic poet, who wrote a ridiculous satire against women, quoted by Ælian; nor yet Simonides, who was one of the greatest of the ancient poets, and flourished in the seventy-fifth Olympiad; but a modern gentleman connected with America, whose work I am sufficient scholar neither to use nor to criticise.

promontory called Solocis, they built a temple to Neptune. A short distance further on they found a beautiful lake, the edges of which were bordered with large reeds, the country abounding in elephants and other game; a day's sail from this place, they founded five small cities near the sea, called respectively Cariconticos, Gytte, Acra, Millitca, and Arambys. The next most important part of their voyage was their discovery of the great River Lixius, on the banks of which they found a pastoral people they called the Lixitae. These seem to have been a mild people; but there were in the neighbourhood tribes of a ferocious character, and they were also told there were Trogloditae dwelling in the mountains, where the Lixius took its rise, who were fleeter than horses. Unfortunately we are not told how long the Carthaginians took in reaching this River Lixius; but if the Carthaginians had been keeping close in shore they would not have met with a river that looked great until they reached the mouth of the Ouro (23° 36′ N. lat.), which is four miles wide, but only an estuary; but as the Carthaginians do not seem to have gone up it, they may not have noticed its imperfections, and so, pursuing that dangerous method of judging a West African river from its mouth, regarded it as a great river. However this may have been, they took with them as guides and interpreters some of the Lixitae, and continued their voyage for three days, when they came to a large bay, an island in it containing a circle of five stadia, and proceeded to found another colony on that island, calling it Cerne, where they judged they were as far from the Pillars of Hercules as these were from Carthage. So it is held now that Cerne is the same as the French trading station Arguin (about 240 miles north of Senegal River), on to whose shoals the wreck of the French frigate *La Méduse* drifted in 1816, the tragedy of which is familiar to us all from Géricault's great painting.

Hanno next called at a place where there was a great lake, which they entered by sailing up a river called by them Cheretes. In this they found three

islands, all larger than the island of Cerne. One day's sail then brought them to the extremity of the lake overhung by mountains, which were inhabited by savages clad in wild beasts' skins, who prevented their landing by pelting them with stones. The next point in their voyage was a large and broad river, infested with crocodiles and river horses; and from this place they made their way back to Cerne, where they rested and repaired and then set forth again, sailing south along the African shores for twelve successive days. The language of the natives of these regions the Lixitae did not understand, and the Carthaginians could not hold any communication with them for another reason, that they always fled from them; towards the last day they approached some large mountains covered with trees. They went on two days further, when they came to a large opening in the sea, on land on either side of which was a plain whereon they saw fires in every direction. At this place[1] they refilled their water barrels, and continued their voyage five days further, when they reached a large bay which their interpreters said was called the Western Horn. In this bay they found a large island, in the centre of which was a salt lake with a small island in it. When they went ashore in the day time they saw no inhabitants, but at night time they heard in every direction a confused noise of pipes, cymbals, drums and song, which alarmed the crew, while the diviners they had with them, equivalent to our naval chaplains, strongly advised Hanno to leave that place as speedily as possible. Hanno, however, being less alarmed than his companions, pushed on South, and they soon found themselves abreast of a country blazing with fires, streams of which seemed to be pouring from the mountain tops down into the sea. "We sailed quickly thence," says Hanno, "being much terrified." Proceeding four days further they found that things did not improve

[1] Major identifies this place with Cape Verde, pointing out that the inability of the Lixitae interpreters to understand the language accords with the fact that at the Senegal commences the country of the blacks; "the immense opening" he regards as the Gambia.

in appearance from their point of view, for the whole country seemed ablaze at night, a country full of fire, and at one point the fire seemed to fly up to the very stars. Hanno says their interpreters told them that this great fire was the Chariot of the Gods. Three days more sailing South brought them to another bay, called the Southern Horn. In this bay they found a large island, in which again there was a lake with another island in it, having inhabitants who were savage, and whose bodies were covered with hair. These people the interpreters called the Gorillae—some were captured and taken aboard, but so savage and unmanageable did they prove that they were killed and the skins preserved. As most of the inhabitants of the Islands of the Gorillae seemed to be females, and as these ladies had made such a gallant fight of it with their Carthaginian captors, Hanno kept their skins to hang up in the temple of Juno on his return home, evidently intending to be complimentary both to the Goddess and the Gorillae; but it is to be feared neither of them took it as it was meant, for Hanno had no luck from the Gods after this, having to turn back from shortness of provisions, and finally ending his career by, some say, being killed, and others say exiled from Carthage on account of his having a lion so tame that it would carry baggage for him; Punic public opinion held that this demonstrated him to be a man dangerous to the State. The Gorillae seem to have worked out their vengeance on white men by making it more than any man's character for truth is worth to see one of them—except stuffed in a museum, with a label on.

How far Hanno really went down South is not known with any certainty. M. Gosselin held he only reached the river Nun, on the Moroccoan coast. Major Rennell fixed his furthest point somewhere north of the Sierra Leone, and held the Island of the Gorillae to be identical with the Island of Sherboro'. Bougainville believed that he at any rate went well into the Bight of Benin, while others think he went at any rate as far as Gaboon. I cannot myself see why he should not have done so,

considering the winds and tides of the locality and the time taken; indeed I should be quite willing to believe he went down to Congo, and that in the most terrific of fires he witnessed an eruption of the volcanic peak of Cameroon, a volcano not yet extinct. Indeed the name given to this high fire "that almost reached the stars" by his interpreters—the Chariot of the Gods—is not so very unlike the name the Cameroon Peak bears to this day, Mungo Mah Lobeh, the Throne or Place of Thunder, and this native name is also capable of being translated into "the Place of the Gods" or spirits. The thing I do not believe in the affair is that the Lixitae interpreters ever called it or any other place "a chariot"; for as Hanno was the first white man they had seen, and they had no chariots of their own, it is unlikely they could have known anything of chariots; and I think this Chariot of the Gods must have been an error of Hanno's in translating his interpreter's remarks. It is perfectly excusable in him if it is so, because to understand what an interpreter means who does not know your language, and whose own language you are not an adept in, and who is translating from a language regarding which you are both alike ignorant, is a process fraught with difficulty. I have tried it, so speak feelingly. It is true it is not an impossibility, as those unversed in African may hastily conjecture, because at least one-third of an African language consists in gesture, and this gesture part is fairly common to all tribes I have met, so that by means of it you can get on with daily life; but it breaks down badly when you come to the names of places. I myself once went on a long march to a place that subsequent knowledge informed me was "I don't know" in my director's native tongue. Still, if he did not know, I did not know, and so it was all the same. I got there all right, therefore it did not matter to me; but I was haunted during my stay in it by a confused feeling that perhaps I was flying in the face of Science by being somewhere else—being in two places at the same time.

I really, however, cannot help thinking Hanno must

have got past the Niger Delta; for there is nothing to frighten any one, as far as the look of things go, until you go south from Calabar, and find yourself facing that magnificent Great Cameroon and Fernando Po; and Hanno's people were scared as they were never scared before. Yet, again, there are those fires, which were in the main doubtless what that very wise and not half-appreciated missionary, the late Rev. J. Leighton Wilson, says they were, namely, fires made by the native burning down the high grass at the end of a dry season to make his farms. Now Hanno could have seen any quantity of these along parts of the shores of the Bight of Benin, but is not likely to have seen them to any alarming extent on the Biafran Bight, because the shores thereof are deeply fringed with mangrove swamps, and the native does not start making farms in them. Hanno might have seen what looked like the smoke of innumerable fires on the sides of Cameroon Mountain and Fernando Po. I myself have seen the whole mighty forest there smoking as if beneath it smouldered the infernal regions themselves; but it is only columns and wafts of mist, and so gives no blaze at night; if you want to see a real land of flame with, over it, a pall of cloud reflecting back its crimson light in a really terrifying way, you must go south of Cameroon, south of Congo Français, south, until you reach the region of the Great Congo itself; and there—on the grass-covered hills and plains of the Lower Congo lands—you will see a land of fire at the end of the dry season, terrific enough to awe any man. Of course, if Hanno passed the Congo and went down as far as the fringing sands of the Kalahari desert, he would certainly not have been able to get stores; but also down there he would not have met with an island on which there were gorillas; for even if we grant that there was sufficient dense forest south of the Congo in his days for gorillas to have inhabited, and allow that in old days gorillas were south of the Congo, which they are not now, still there is no island near the coast. So I am afraid we cannot quite settle Hanno's furthest point, and

must content ourselves by saying he was a brave man, a good sailor, and a credit therefore to his country and the human race.

After Hanno's time I cannot find any record of a regular set of trading expeditions down the West Coast by the Carthaginians. From scattered observations it is certain the commerce of the Carthaginians with the Barbary Coast and the Bight of Benin was long carried on; but it does not seem to have been carried on along the Coast of the Bight of Biafra; and the voyage in 170 B.C. may be cited in support of this, showing that the voyage as far south as Eudoxus went was then considered as marvellous and new. Still, on the other hand, it must be remembered that, prior to our own day, the navigator had no great inducement to tell the rest of the world exactly where he had been; indeed, the navigator whose main interest is commerce is, to this day, not keen on so doing. He would rather keep little geographical facts—such as short cuts by creeks, and places where either gold, or quicksilver, and buried ivory, is plentiful—to himself, than go explaining about these things for the sake of getting an unrepaying honour. One sees this so much in studying the next period of this history—the early Portuguese and early French discoveries; you will find that one of these nations knew about a place years before the other came along, and discovered it, and claimed it as its own—with disputes as a natural consequence.

There has, however, been one very interesting point in the dealing of the nations of higher culture with the Africans, and that is the way their commerce with them has had periods of abeyance. The Egyptians have left us record of having been extensively in touch with the interior of Africa, *via* the Nile Valley—then came a pause. Then came the Carthaginian commerce —then a pause. Then the Portuguese, French, English, Dutch, and Dane trading enterprise, say, roughly from 1340 to 1700—then a falling off of this enterprise; revived during the Slave-trade days, falling off again on its suppression, and reviving in our own days. I suppose

I ought to say greatly, but—well, we will discuss that later. These pauses have always been caused by the nations of higher culture getting too busy with wars at home to trouble themselves about the African, all the more so because the produce of Africa has filtered slowly, whether it was fetched by white man or no, into their markets through the hands of the energetic North African tribes and the Arabs. Whenever the white man has settled down with his home affairs, and has had time to spare, he has always gone and looked up the African again, "discovered him," and he has always found him in the same state of culture that the pioneers of the previous Blüth-period found him in. Hanno does not find down the West Coast another Carthage—he finds bush fires, and hears the tom-tom and the horn and the shouts. He finds people slightly clad and savage. Then read Aluise da Ca da Mostro and the rest of Prince Henry's adventures; well, you might—save that the old traveller is more interesting—almost be reading a book published yesterday. The only radical change made for large quantities of Africans by means of white intercourse was made by exporting them to America. How this is going to turn out we do not yet know; and whether or no, after the present period of white exploitation of Africa, there may not come another pause from our becoming too interested in some big fight of our own to keep up our interest in the African, we cannot tell; so I will pass on to a very interesting point in a method of trade mentioned by the early authorities—the silent trade.

Herodotus gives us the first description of it,[1] saying that the Carthaginians state that beyond the Pillars of Hercules there is a region of Libya, and men who inhabit it. When they arrive among these people and have unloaded their merchandise they set it in order on the shore, go on board their ships and make a great smoke, and the inhabitants seeing the smoke come down to the sea shore, deposit gold in exchange for the merchandise and withdraw to some distance. The

[1] *Melpomene*, IV. 96.

Carthaginians then going ashore examine the goods, and if the quantity seems sufficient for the merchandise they take it and sail away; but if it is not sufficient they go on board again and wait; the natives then approach and deposit more gold until they have satisfied them: neither party ever wrongs the other, for they do not touch the gold before it is made adequate to the value of the merchandise, nor do the natives touch the merchandise before the Carthaginians have taken the gold.

The next description of this silent trade I have been able to find is that given by Aluise da Ca da Mostro, a Venetian gentleman who, allured by the accounts of the riches of West Africa given by Prince Henry the Navigator, abandoned trading with the Low Countries, entered the Prince's service, and went down the Coast in 1455. When in the district of Cape Blanco, at a place called by him Hoden, he was told that six days' journey from this place there was a place called Tagazza, signifying a chest of gold; there large quantities of rock salt were dug from the earth every year and carried on camels by the Arabs and the Azanaghi, who were tawny Moors,[1] in separate companies to Timbuk, and from thence to the Empire of Melli, which belonged to the negroes; having arrived there they disposed of their salt in the course of eight days, at the rate of two and three hundred mitigals the load (a mitigal = a ducat), according to the quantity thereof, after which they returned home with the gold they had been paid in. These merchants reckoned it forty days' journey on horseback from Tagazza to "Timbuk" as Mostro, while from Timbuk to Melli it is thirty days' journey. Ca da Mostro then inquired to what use the salt taken to Melli was put; and they said that the merchants used a certain quantity of it themselves, for on account of their country lying near the Line, where the days and nights are of equal length, at certain seasons of the year the heats are

[1] The writers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries commonly divide up the natives of Africa into—1, Moors; 2, Tawny Moors; 3, Black Moors, a term that lingers to this day in our word Blackey-moor; 4, Negroes.

excessive, and putrefied the blood unless salt was taken; their method of taking it was to dissolve a piece in a porringer of water daily and drink it. When the remainder of the salt reached Melli, carried thither on camels, each camel load was broken up into pieces of a suitable size for one man to carry. A large number of what Ca da Mostro calls footmen—whom we nowadays call porters—were assembled at Melli to be ready to carry the salt from thence further away still into the heart of Africa.

I have dwelt on this salt's wanderings because we have here a very definite description of a trade route, and the importance of understanding these trade routes is very great. We do not learn, however, exactly where the salt goes to beyond Melli; but Melli seems to have been, as Timbuctoo was, and to a certain extent still is, a trade focus; and from Melli evidently the salt went in many directions, and it is interesting to note Ca da Mostro's observations on the salt porters, who he says carry in each hand a long forked stick, which when they are tired they fix into the ground and rest their loads on; so to-day may you see the West African porters doing, save that it is only the porters who have to pass over woodless plateaux on their journeys that carry two sticks.

Speaking however further on the course of this salt trade Ca da Mostro says that some of the merchants of Melli go with it until they come to a certain water, whether fresh or salt his informant could not say; but he holds it most likely was fresh, or there would be no need of carrying salt there; and it is the opinion of the few people who have of late years interested themselves in the matter that this great water is the Niger Joliba. But be this as it may, when those merchants from Melli arrive on the banks of this great water they place their shares of salt in heaps in a row, every one setting a mark on his own. This done, the merchants retire half a day's journey; then "the negroes, who will not be seen or spoken with, and who seem to be the inhabitants of some islands, come in large boats," and having viewed the salt lay a sum of gold on

[To face page 116.

Oil River Natives.

every heap and then retire. When they are all gone the negro merchants who own the salt return, and if the quantity of gold pleases them they take it and leave the salt; if not, they leave both and withdraw themselves again. The silent people then return, and the heaps from which they find the gold has been removed they carry away, and either advance more gold to the other heaps or take their gold from them and leave the salt. In this manner, says Ca da Mostro, from very ancient times these negroes have traded without either speaking to or seeing each other, until a few years before, when he was at Cape Blanco among the Azanaghi, who supply the negroes of Melli with their salt as aforesaid, and who evidently get from them gossip as well as gold. They told him that their fellow merchants among the black Moors had told them that they had had serious trouble in consequence of the then Emperor of Melli, a man who took more general interest in affairs than was common in Emperors of Melli, having been fired with a desire to know why these customers of his traders did not like being seen; he had commanded the salt merchants when they next went to traffic with the silent people to capture some of them for him by digging pits near the salt heaps, concealing themselves therein and then rushing out and seizing some of the strange people when they came to look at the salt heaps. The merchants did not at all relish the royal commission, for they knew, as any born trader would, that it must be extremely bad for trade to rush out and seize customers by the scruff of their necks while they were in the midst of their shopping. However, much as the command added to their commercial anxieties, the thing had to be done, or there was no doubt the Emperor would relieve them both of all commercial anxieties and their heads at one and the same time. So they carried out the royal command, and captured four of their silent customers. Three they immediately liberated, thinking that to keep so many would only increase the bad blood, and one specimen would be sufficient to satisfy the Imperial curiosity.

Unfortunately however the unfortunate captive they retained would neither speak nor eat, and in a few days died; and so the salt merchants of Melli returned home in very low spirits, feeling assured that their Emperor would be actively displeased with them for failing to satisfy his curiosity, and that the silent customers would be too alarmed and angered with them for their unprovoked attack to deal with them again. Subsequent events proved them to be correct in both surmises: his Majesty was highly disgusted at not having been able to see one of these people; and naturally, for the description given to him of those they had captured was at least highly interesting. The merchants said they were a span taller than themselves and well shaped, but that they made a terrible figure because their under lip was thicker than a man's fist and hung down on their breasts; also that it was very red, and something like blood dropped from it and from their gums. The upper lip was no larger than that of other people, and owing to this there were exposed to view both gums and teeth, which were of great size, particularly the teeth in the corners of the mouth. Their eyes were of great size and blackness. As for the customers, for three years went the merchants of Melli to the banks of the great water and arranged their salt heaps and looked on them for gold dust in vain: but the fourth year it was there; and the merchants of Melli believed that their customers' lips had begun to putrefy through the excessive heat and the want of salt, so that being unable to bear so grievous a distemper they were compelled to return to their trade. Things were then established on a fairly reasonable basis; the merchants did not again attempt to see their customers, and they knew from their experience with their captive that they were by nature dumb; for had there been speech in him, would he not have spoken under the treatment to which he was subjected? And as for the Emperor of Melli he said right out he did not care whether those blacks could speak or no, so long as he had but the profit of their gold.

This gold, I may remark, that was collected at Melli was divided into three parts: the first was sent by the Melli caravans to Kokhia on the caravan route to Syria and Cairo; the other two parts went from Melli to Timbuctoo, where it was again divided up, some of it going to Toet,[1] and from thence along the coast to Tunis, in Barbary. Some of it went to Hoden, not far from Cape Blanco, and from there to Oran and Hona; thence it went to Fez, Morocco, Azila-Azasi, and Moosa, towns outside the Straits of Gibraltar, whence it went into Europe, through the hands of Italians, and other Christians, who exchanged their merchandise for the wares of the Barbary Moors; and the remainder of the gold went down to the West African Coast to the Portuguese at Arguin. This description of the gold route is by Ca da Mostro, and is the first description of the West African trade route I have found.

But I must tear myself from the fascination of gold and its trade routes and return to that silent trade. The next person after Ca da Mostro to mention it is Captain Richard Jobson, who in 1620–1621 made a voyage especially to discover "the golden trade," of what he calls Tombák, which is our last author's Timbuk, by way of the Gambia, then held by many to be a mouth of the Niger.

Jobson's inquiries regarding this "golden trade" informed him that the great demand for salt in the Gambia trade arose from the desire for it among the Arabiks of Barbary; that the natives themselves only consumed a small percentage of this import, trading away the main to those Arabiks in the hinterland, who in their turn traded it for gold to Tombák, where the demand for it was great, because that city, although possessing all manner of other riches and commodities, lacked salt, so that the Arabiks did a good trade therein. Jobson was also informed that the Arabiks had, as well as the market for salt at Timbuctoo, a market for it with a strange people who would not be seen, and who lived not far from Yaze; that the salt was carried to them,

[1] Ato, according to the version given in Grynæus.

and in exchange they gave gold. Asking a native merchant, who was engaged in this trade, why they would not be seen, he made a sign to his lips, but would say no more. Jobson, however, learnt from other sources that the reason these negroes buy salt from the tawny Moors is because of the thickness of their lips, which hang down upon their breasts, and, being raw, would putrefy if they did not take salt, a thing their country does not afford, so that they must traffic for it with the Moors. The manner they employ, according to Jobson, is this: the Moors on a fixed day bring their goods to a place assigned, where there are certain houses appointed for them; herein they deposit their commodities, and, laying their salt and other goods in parcels or heaps separately, depart for a whole day, during which time their customers come, and to each parcel of goods lay down a proportion of gold as they value it, and leave both together. The merchants then return, and as they like the bargain take the gold and leave their wares, or if they think the price offered too little, they divide the merchandise into two parts, leaving near the gold as much as they are inclined to give for it, and then again depart. At their next return the bargain is finished, for they either find more gold added or the whole taken away, and the goods left on their hands.

A further confirmation of the existence of this method of trading we find in that most interesting voyage of Claude Jannequin, Sieur de Rochfort, 1639. He says, "In this cursed country"—he always speaks of West Africa like that—"there is no provision but fish dried in the sun, and maize and tobacco." The natives will only trade by the French laying down on the ground what they would give for the provisions, and then going away, on which the natives came and took the commodities and left the fish in exchange. The regions he visited were those of Cape Blanco.

To this day you will find a form of this silent trade still going on in Guinea. I have often seen on market roads in many districts, but always well away from Europeanised settlements, a little space cleared by the

wayside, and neatly laid with plantain leaves, whereon were very tidily arranged various little articles for sale—a few kola nuts, leaves of tobacco, cakes of salt, a few heads of maize, or a pile of yams or sweet potatoes. Against each class of articles so many cowrie shells or beans are placed, and, always hanging from a branch above, or sedately sitting in the middle of the shop, a little fetish. The number of cowrie shells or beans indicate the price of the individual articles in the various heaps, and the little fetish is there to see that any one who does not place in the stead of the articles removed their proper price, or who meddles with the till, shall swell up and burst. There is no doubt it is a very easy method of carrying on commerce.

In what the silent trade may have originated it is hard to say; but one thing is certain, that the dread and fear of the negroes did not result from the evil effects of the slave trade, as so many of their terrors are said to have done, for we have seen notice of it long before this slave trade arose. Nevertheless, there can be but little doubt that it arose from a sense of personal insecurity, and has fetish in it, the natives holding it safer to leave so dangerous a thing as trafficking with unknown beings—white things that were most likely spirits, with the smell of death on them—in the hands of their gods. In the cases of it that I have seen no doubt it was done mostly for convenience, one person being thereby enabled to have several shops open at but little working expense; but I have seen it employed as a method of trading between tribes at war with each other.[1] We must dismiss, I fear, bashfulness regarding lips as being a real cause; but I will not dismiss the bleeding lips as a mere traveller's tale, because I have seen quite enough to make me understand what those

[1] Mr. Ling Roth kindly informs me of further instances of this silent trading to be found in *Lander's Journal*, Lond., 1832, iii. 161–163, and Forbes's *Wanderings of a Naturalist*, Lond. 1886, where it is cited for the Kubus of Sumatra. He says it also occurs among the Veddahs, and that there is in no case any Fetish control.

people who told of bleeding thick lips meant; several, not all of my African friends, are a bit thick about the lower lip, and when they have been passing over waterless sun-dried plateaux or bits of desert they are anything but decorative. The lips get swollen and black, and Ca da Mostro does not go too far in his description of what he was told regarding them.

CHAPTER XI

FRENCH DISCOVERY OF WEST AFRICA

Concerning the controversy that is between the French and the Portuguese as to which of them first visited West Africa, with special reference to the fort at Elmina.

WE will now turn our attention to the other pioneers of our present West African trade, and commence with the French, for we cannot disassociate our own endeavours in this region from those of France, Portugal, Holland, and the Brandenburgers; nor are we the earliest discoverers here. When we English heard the West African Coast was a region worth trading with, those great brick-makers for the architects of England's majesty, the traders, went for it and traded, and have made that trading pay as no other nation has been able to do. However, from the first we got called hard names—pirates, ruffians, interlopers, and such like—in fact, every bad name the other nations could spare from the war of abuse they chronically waged against each other.

The French claim to have traded with West Africa prior to the discoveries made there by the emissaries of Prince Henry the Navigator.[1] When on my last voyage

[1] See the first edition of *Henry the Navigator*, by R. H. Major, who, with the enormous wealth of his knowledge, vigorously defends the claim to Portuguese priority; although I do not quite agree with him on the value of the absence of evidence in disproving the French claim, I am deeply indebted to him for the mention of references on the point.

out I was in French territory, I own the discovery of this claim of my French friends came down on me as a shock, because on my previous voyage out I had been in Portuguese possessions, and had spent many a pleasant hour listening to the recital of the deeds of Diego Caõ and Lopez do Gonsalves, and others of that noble brand of man, the fifteenth-century Portugee. I heard then nothing of French discoverers, and also had it well knocked out of my mind that the English had discovered anything of importance in West Africa save the Niger outfalls, and I had a furious war to keep this honour for my fellow countrymen. Then when I got into French territory not one word did I hear of Diego Caõ or Lopez; and so as a distraction from the consideration of the private characters of people still living, I started discoursing on what I considered a safer and more interesting subject, and began to recount how I had had the honour of being personally mixed up in the monument to Diego Caõ at the mouth of the Congo, and what fine fellows—I got no farther than that, when, to my horror, I heard my heroes called microbes, followed by torrents of navigators' names, all French, and all unknown to me. Being out for information I never grumble when I get it, let it be what it may. So I asked my French friends to write down clearly on paper the names of those navigators, and promised as soon as I left the forests of the Equator, and reached the book forests of Europe, I would try and find out more about them. I have; and I own that I owe profound apologies to those truly great Frenchmen for not having made their acquaintance sooner; nevertheless I still fail to see why my honoured Portuguese, Diego and Lopez, should have been called microbes, and I have no regrets about my fights for the honour of the Niger for my own countrymen, nor for my constant attempts to take the conceit out of my French and Portuguese friends, as a set-off for "the conceit about England" they were always trying to take out of me, by holding forth on what those Carthaginians had done on the West Coast before France or Portugal were so much as dreamt of.

The Portuguese discoveries you can easily read of in Major's great book on Prince Henry; and as this book is fully accepted as correct by the highest Portuguese authorities, it is safer to do so than to attempt to hunt your Portuguese hero for yourself, because of the quantity of names each of them possesses, and the airy indifference as to what part of that name their national chroniclers use in speaking of them. I have tried it, and have several times been in danger of going to my grave with the idea that I was investigating the exploits of two separate gentlemen, whereas I was only dealing with two parts of one gentleman's name; nevertheless, it is a thing worth learning Portuguese for. And, in addition to Major's book, we have now, thanks to the Hakluyt Society, that superb thing, the Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea, by Gomez Eanes de Zurara—a work completed in 1453. This work is one on which we are largely dependent for the details of the early Portuguese discoveries, because Gomez Eanes spent the later part of his life in tidying up the Torre do Tombo—namely, the national archives, of which he was keeper—and his idea of tidying up included the lady-like method of destroying old papers. It makes one cold now to think of the things De Zurara may have destroyed; but he evidently regarded himself, as does the nineteenth century spring-cleaner, as a human benefactor; and, strange to say, his contemporaries quite took his view; indeed, this job was done at the request of the Cortes, and with the Royal sanction. There is also an outstanding accusation of forgery against Zurara, but that is a minor offence, and is one we need only take into consideration when contemplating the question as to whether a man capable of destroying early manuscripts and forgery might not be also capable of leaving out of his Chronicle, in honour of the Navigator, any mention of there being Frenchmen on the Coast, when he sent out his emissaries to discover what might lay hidden from the eye of man down in the Southern Seas. I do not, however, think De Zurara left out this thing intentionally, but that he had no

knowledge of it if it did exist, for no man could have written as he wrote, unless he had a heart too great for such a meanness. Certain it is Prince Henry never knew, for these are the five reasons given by Zurara, in the grave, noble splendour of his manner, why the Prince undertook the discoveries with which his name will be for ever associated. I give the passage almost in full because of its beauty. "And you should note well that the noble spirit of this Prince (Henry the Navigator) by a sort of natural constraint was ever urging him both to begin and carry out very great deeds; for which reason after the taking of Ceuta, he always kept ships well armed against the Infidel, both for war and because he also had a wish to know the land that lay beyond the Isles of Canary and that Cape called Bojador, for that up to his time neither by writings nor by the memory of man was known with any certainty the nature of the land beyond that Cape. Some said indeed Saint Brandan had passed that way, and there was another tale of two galleys rounding the Cape which never returned . . . and because the said Lord Infant wished to know the truth of this—since it seemed to him if he, or some other Lord, did not endeavour to gain that knowledge, no mariners or merchants would ever dare to attempt it, (for the reason that none of them ever trouble themselves to sail to a place where there is not a sure and certain hope of profit,) and seeing also that no other prince took any pains in this matter, he sent out his own ships against those parts, to have manifest certainty of them all, and to this he was stirred up by his zeal for the service of God, and of King Dom Duarto, his Lord and brother, who then reigned; and this was the first reason of his action."

"The second reason was that if there chanced to be in those lands a population of Christians or some havens into which it would be possible to sail without peril, many kinds of merchandise might be brought to this nation which would find a ready market, and reasonably so because no other people of these parts traded with them, nor yet people of any other that were known;

and also the products of this nation might be taken there, which traffic would bring great profit to our countrymen."

"The third reason was that as it was said that the power of the Moors in that land of Africa was very much greater than was commonly supposed, and that there were no Christians among them nor any other race of men, and because every wise man is obliged by natural prudence to wish for a knowledge of the power of his enemy; therefore the said Lord Infant exerted himself to cause them to be fully discovered to make it known determinedly how far the power of those Infidels extended."

"The fourth reason was because during the one and thirty years he had warred against the Moors he had never found a Christian King nor a Lord outside this land, who for the love of Jesus Christ would aid him in the said war; therefore he sought to know if there were in those parts any Christian Princes in whom the charity and the love of Christ was so ingrained that they would aid him against those enemies of the Faith."

"The fifth reason was the great desire to make increase of the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to bring to Him all the souls that should be saved."

According to the Portuguese, Gil Eannes was the first emissary of Prince Henry who succeeded in passing Cape Bojador. This feat he accomplished in 1434; but on this his first voyage out he contented himself with passing the Cape: a thing which previous expeditions of Prince Henry had failed to do, and which, so far apparently as Prince Henry knew, had not been done before, for it was regarded as a tremendous achievement.

The next year Prince Henry's cupbearer, Affonso Gonsalves Baladaya, set out accompanied by Gil Eannes in a caravel; and the coast to the South of Bojador was visited; their furthest expedition was to a shallow bay called by them Angra des Ruives.[1] They then returned

[1] This is an interesting case of the alteration that has taken place in Portuguese place names in West Africa, Angra des Ruives in English is Gurnard Bay, and this name was given to it

to Portugal, and the next year again went down the coast as far as a galley-shaped rock. This place they called Pedro de Galli, from its appearance; its present name is Pedra de Galla. Their chief achievement was the discovery of the Rio do Oura. It is not an important river in itself, but only one of those deceptive estuaries common on the West Coast. But it was the first West African place the Portuguese got gold dust at, hence its name. The amount of gold was apparently not considerable, and the chief cargo that expedition took home was sea wolves' skins; they reported quantities of seals or sea wolves as they called them here, and this report was the cause of the next Portuguese expedition; for the Portuguese in those days seem to have always been anxious for sea wolves' oil and skins; and whether this be a survival or no, it seems to me curious that the ladies of Lisbon are to this day very keen on sealskin jackets, which their climate can hardly call for imperatively. But, however this may be, it is certain that we have no account of the Portuguese having passed south of the next important cape South of Bojador, namely, Blanco, before 1443. The terrible tragedy of Tangiers and political troubles hindered their explorations from 1436 to 1441,[1] and the French claim to have been down the West Coast trading not only before this date, but before Prince Henry sent a single expedition out at all, namely, as early as 1346.

The French story is that there was a deed of association of the merchants of Dieppe and Rouen of the date 1364. This deed was to arrange for the carrying on to greater proportions of their already existing trade with West Africa. The original of this deed was burnt, according to Labat, at Dieppe, in the conflagration of 1694.[2] How

by the Portuguese because of the quantity of this fish found there. In the *West African Pilot* you find the place called Garnet Bay, and the *Pilot* says "fish are abundant"; but as it does not say that garnets abound there, nor that it was discovered by Lord Wolseley, I think there is reason to believe that its name is Gurnard Bay, in translation of Angra des Ruives.

[1] *Prince Henry the Navigator*; Major.

[2] Labat, *Afrique occidentale*, vol. iv. p. 8. 1724.

long before this Association was formed that trade had been carried on, it is a little difficult to make out, I find, from the usual hindrance to the historical study of West Africa, namely, lack of documentary evidence and a profusion of recriminatory lying. This Association was under the patronage of the Dukes of Normandy, then Kings of England; and its ultimate decay is partly attributed to the political difficulties these patrons became involved in. The French authorities say the Association was an exceedingly flourishing affair; and it is stated that under its auspices factories were established at Sierra Leone, and that a fort was built at La Mina del Ore, or del Mina, the place now known as Elmina, as early as 1382. Now it is round the subject of this fort that most controversy wages, for this French statement does not at all agree with the Portuguese account of the fort. The latter claim to have discovered the coast—called by them La Mina, by us the Gold—in 1470, with an expedition commanded by João de Santarim and Pedro de Escobara. The Portuguese, finding this part of the coast rich in gold, and knowing the grabbing habits of other nations where this was concerned, determined to secure this trade for themselves in a sound practical way, although they were already guarded by a Papal Bull. The expedition that discovered La Mina was the last one made during the reign of Affonso V.; but his son, who succeeded him as João II., rapidly set about acting on the information it brought home. This king indeed took an intelligent interest in the Guinea trade, and was well versed in it; for a part of his revenues before he came to the throne had been derived from it and its fisheries. João II. energetically pushed on the enterprise founded by his father Affonso V., who had in 1469 rented the trade of the Guinea Coast to Fernam Gomez for five years at 500 equizodas a year,[1] on the condition that 100 leagues of new coast should be discovered annually, starting from Sierra Leone, the then furthest known part, and reserving the ivory trade to the Crown. The expedition sent out by King João,

[1] Equal to nearly £30 English per annum.

commanded by the celebrated Diego de Azambuja, took with it, in ten caravels and two smaller craft, ready fashioned stones and bricks, and materials for building, with the intention of building a fort as near as might be to a place called Sama, where the previous expedition had reported gold dust to be had from the natives. This fort was to be a means of keeping up a constant trade with the natives, instead of depending only on the visits of ships to the coast. Azambuja selected the place we know now as Elmina as a suitable site for this fort. Having obtained a concession of the land from the King Casamanca, on representing to him what an advantage it would be to him to have such a strong place wherein he and his people could seek security against their enemies, and which would act as a constant market place for his trade, and a storehouse for the Portuguese goods. Azambuja lost no time in building the fort with his ready-fashioned materials, and not only the fort, but a church as well. Both were dedicated to San Gorge da Mina, and a daily mass was instituted to be said therein for the repose of the soul of the great Prince Henry the Navigator, whose body had been laid to rest in November, 1460. Indeed, one cannot but be struck with the wealth of Portuguese information that we possess, regarding the building of the castle at Elmina and by the good taste shown by the Portuguese throughout; for, besides establishing this mass—a mass that should be said in all Catholic churches on the West African Coast to this day in memory of the great man whose enterprise first opened up that great, though terrible region, to the civilised world—King João granted many franchises and privileges to people who would go and live at San Gorge da Mina, and aid in expanding the trade and civilisation of the surrounding region, which is as it should be; for people who go and live in West Africa for the benefit of their country deserve all these things and money down as well. Having done these, the king evidently thought he deserved some honour himself, which he certainly did, so he called himself Lord of Guinea, and commanded that all subsequent dis-

coverers should take possession of the places they discovered in a more substantial way than heretofore; for it had been their custom merely to erect wooden crosses or to carve on trees the motto of Prince Henry, *Talent de bien faire*. The monuments King João commanded should be erected in place of these transient emblems he designed himself; they were to be square pillars of stone six feet high, with his arms upon them, and two inscriptions on opposite sides, in Latin and Portuguese respectively, containing the exact date when the discovery of the place was made; by his order, the cross that was to be on each, was to be of iron and cramped into the pedestal. Major says the cross was to surmount the structure; but my Portuguese friends tell me it was to be in the pedestal, and also that the remains of these old monuments are still to be seen in their possessions; so we must presume that the outfit for an exploring expedition in King João's days included a considerable cargo of ready dressed stones and materials for monuments, and that from the quantity of discoveries these expeditions made, the sixteenth century Portuguese homeward bound must have been flying as light as the Cardiff bound collier of to-day.

Still it is remarkable that with all the wealth of detail that we have of these Portuguese discoveries in the fifteenth century there is no mention of the French being on the coast before Pedro do Cintra reaches Sierra Leone and calls it by this name because of the thunder on the mountains roaring like a lion, and so on; but he says nothing of French factories ashore. Azambuja gives quantities of detail regarding the building of San Gorge da Mina, but never says a word about there being already at this place a French fort; yet Sieur Villault, Escuyer, Sieur de Bellfond,[1] speaks of it with detail and certainty. Also M. Robbe says that one of the ships sent out by the association of merchants in 1382 was called the *Virgin*, that she got as far as Kommenda,

[1] *A Relation of the Coasts of Africa called Guinea, collected by Sieur Villault, Escuyer, Sieur de Bellfond, in the years* 1666–1667. London: John Starkey, 1670.

and thence to the place where Mina stands, and that next year they built at this place a strong house, in which they kept ten or twelve of their men to secure it; and they were so fortunate in this settlement that in 1387 the colony was considerably enlarged, and did a good trade until 1413, when, owing to the wars in France, the store of these adventurers being exhausted, they were obliged to quit not only Mina, but their other settlements, as Sestro Paris, Cape Mount, Sierra Leone, and Cape Verde.

Villault, who went to West Africa to stir up the French to renew the Guinea trade, openly laments the folly of the French in ever having abandoned it owing to certain prejudices they had taken against the climate. His account of it is that about the year 1346 some adventurers of Dieppe, a port in Normandy, who as descendants of the Normans, were well used to long voyages, sailed along the coast of the negroes, Guinea, and settled several colonies in those parts, particularly about Cape Verde, in the Bay of Rio Fesco, and along the Melequeta coast. To the Bay, which extends from Cape Ledo to Cape Mount, they gave the name of the Bay of France; that of Petit Dieppe to the village of Rio Corso (between Rio France and Rio Sestro); that of Sestro Paris to Grand Sestro, not far from Cape Palmas; while they carried to France great quantities of Guinea pepper and elephants' tusks, whence the inhabitants of Dieppe set up the trade of turning ivory and making several useful works, as combs, for which they grew famous, and still continue so. Villault also speaks of "a fair church still in being" at Elmina, adorned with the arms of France, and also says that the chief battery to the sea is called by the natives La Battarie de France; and he speaks of the affection the natives have for France, and says they beat their drums in the French manner. Barbot also speaks of the affection of the natives for the French, and says that on his last voyage in 1682 the king sent him his second son as hostage, if he would come up to Great Kommondo, and treat about settling in his country, although he had refused the English and the

Dutch. Barbot, however, does not agree with Villault about the prior rights of France to the discovery of Guinea; he thinks that if these facts be true it is strange that there is no mention of so important an enterprise in French historians, and concludes that it would be unjust to the Portuguese to attribute the first discovery of this part of the world to the French. He also thinks it evidence against it that the Portuguese historians are silent on the point, and that Azambuja, when he began to build his castle at Elmina in 1484, never mentions there being a castle there that had been built by Frenchmen in 1385. This, however, I think is not real evidence against the prior right of France. Take, for instance, the examples you get constantly when reading the books of Portuguese and Dutch writers on Guinea. You cannot fail to be struck how they ignore each other's existence as much as possible when credit is to be given; indeed were it not for the necessity they feel themselves under of abusing each other, I am sure they would do so altogether, but this they cannot resist. Here is a sample of what the Portuguese say of the Dutch: "That the rebels (meaning the Dutch) gained more from the blacks by drunkenness, giving them wine and strong liquors, than by force of arms, and instructing them as ministers of the Devil in their wickedness. But that their dissolute lives and manners, joined to the advantage which the Portuguese at Mina, though inferior in numbers, had gained over them in some rencontres, had rendered them as contemptible among the blacks for their cowardice as want of virtue. That however the blacks, being a barbarous people, susceptible of first impressions, readily enough swallowed Calvin's poison (Protestantism), as well as took off the merchandise which the Dutch, taking advantage of the Portuguese indolence, sold along the coast, where they were become absolute pirates." Then, again, the same author says, "The quantity of merchandises brought by the Dutch and their cheapness, has made the barbarians greedy of them, although persons of quality and honour assured them that they would

willingly pay double for Portuguese goods, as suspecting the Dutch to be of less value, buying them only for want of better."[1] I could give you also some beautiful examples of what the Dutch say of the Portuguese and the English, and of what the French say of both, but I have not space; moreover, it is all very like what you can read to-day in things about rival nations and traders out in West Africa. I myself was commonly called by the Portuguese there a pirate because I was English, and that was the proper thing to call the English—there was no personal incivility meant; and I quote the above passage just to impress on you that when you are reading about West African affairs, either ancient or modern, you must make allowance for this habit of speaking of rival nations—it is the climate. And although the Portuguese and the Dutch may choose to ignore the French early discoveries, yet they both showed a keen dread of the French from their being so popular with the natives, and did their utmost to oust them from the West Coast, which they succeeded in doing for a long period. And then again to this day, when a trader in West Africa finds a place where trade is good, he does not cable home to the newspapers about it. If it is necessary that any lying should be done about that place he does it himself; but what he strives most to do is to keep its existence totally unknown to other people; sooner or later some other trader comes along and discovers it, and then that place becomes unhealthy for one or the other of its discoverers—and that is the climate again. Thus by the light of my own dispassionate observations in West Africa, I am quite ready to believe in that early French discovery; and I quite agree with Villault about the quantity of words derived from the French that you will find to this day among the native tongues, and even in the trade English of the Coast, and in districts that have not been under French sway in the historical memory of man. One of these words is the word "Ju Ju," always regarded by the natives as a foreign word. Their own word for religion, or more properly speaking

[1] Vas Conselo's *Life of King João*.

for sacred beings, is "bosum," or "woka." They only say "Ju Ju," so that you white man may understand. The percentage, however, of Portuguese words in trade English is higher than that of French.

After the fifteenth century it is not needful now to discuss in detail the subject of the French presence in West Africa; for both Dutch and Portuguese freely own to the presence there of the Frenchmen, and openly state that they were a source of worry and expense to them, owing to the way the natives preferred the French to either of themselves.

The whole subject of the French conquests in Africa is an exceedingly interesting one, and one I would gladly linger over, for there is in it that fascination that always lies in a subject which contains an element of mystery. The element of mystery in this affair is, why France should have persisted so in the matter—why she should have spent blood and money on it to the extent she has, does, and I am sure will continue to do, without its ever having paid her in the past, or paying her now, or being likely to pay her in the future, as far as one can see. There are moments when it seems to me clear enough why she has done it all; but these moments only come when I am in an atmosphere reeking of La Gloire or La France—a thing I own I much enjoy; but when I am back in the cold intellectual greyness of commercial England, France's conduct in Africa certainly seems a little strange and curious, and far more inexplicable than it was when one was one's self personally risking one's life and ruining one's clothes, after a beetle in the African bush. I really think it is this sporting instinct in me that enables me to understand France in Africa at all; and which gives me a thrill of pleasure when I read in the newspapers of her iniquitous conduct in turning up, flag and baggage, in places where she had no legal right to be, or, worse still, being found in possession of bits of other nations' hinterland when a representative of the other arrives there with the intention of discovering it, and to his disgust and alarm finds the most prominent object in the landscape is the

blue to the mast, blood to the last, flag of France, with a fire-and-flames Frenchman under it, possessed of a pretty gift of writing communications to the real owner of that hinterland—a respectable representative of England or Germany—communications threatening him with immediate extinction, and calling him a filibuster and an assassin, and things like that. For the life of me I cannot help a "Go it, Sal, and I'll hold your bonnit" feeling towards the Frenchman. It is not my fault entirely. Gladly would I hold my own countryman's bonnet, only he won't go it if I do; so I have to content myself with the knowledge that England has made the West Coast pay, and that she certainly did beat the Dutch and Portuguese off the Coast in a commercial war. Still she will never beat France off in that way, because the French interest in Africa is not a commercial one. France can and will injure our commerce in West Africa, in all probability she will ultimately extinguish it, if things go on as they are going, while we cannot hit back and injure her commercial prosperity there because she has none to injure. There is also another point of great interest, and that is the different effect produced by the governmental interference of the two nations in expansion of territory. That the expansion of trade, and spheres of influence are concurrent in this region is now recognised by our own Government;[1] although the Government somewhat flippantly remarks "possibly too late." It is, in my opinion, certainly too late as regards both Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast; but yet we see small evidence of our Government taking themselves seriously in the matter, or of their feeling a regret for having failed to avail themselves of the work done for England on the West Coast by some of the noblest men of our blood. I have often heard it said it was a sad thing for an Englishman to contemplate our West African possessions, save one, the Royal Niger; but I am sure it is a far sadder thing for an Englishwoman who is full of the pride of her race, and who well knows that that pride can only be

[1] Duke of Devonshire's speech at Liverpool, June, 1897.

justified by its men, to see on the one hand the splendid achievements of Mungo Park, the two Landers, the men who held the Gold Coast for England when the Government abandoned it after the battle of Katamansu, of Winwood Reade, who, in the employ of Messrs. Swanzy, won the right to the Niger beyond Sierra Leone, and many others; and on the other hand to see the map of West Africa to-day, which shows only too clearly that the English Government's last chance of saving the honour of England lies in their supporting the Royal Niger Company.

It seems that as soon as a West Coast region falls under direct governmental control with us a process of petrification sets in, with a policy of international amiability and Reubenism, for which we have Scriptural authority to expect nothing but failure. It was of course necessary for our Government to take charge in West Africa when the partitioning of that continent took place; but I fail to admire those men who at the Council Board of Europe lost for England what had been won for her by better, braver men. Still it is no use, in these weird un-Shakesperian times, for any one to use strong language, so I'll turn to the consideration of the advance made in West Africa by France; for any one can understand how a woman must admire the deeds of brave men and the backing up of those deeds by a brave Government.

The earlier history of the French occupation of Africa is that of a series of commercial companies, who all came to a bad end. Of the Association of the Merchants of Dieppe and Rouen in the fourteenth century I have already spoken; and whatever may be the difficulty of proving its existence in 1364, there is, I believe, no one who doubts that it had an existence that terminated in 1664. The French authorities ascribe its fall to the wars in France that succeeded the death of Charles VI., 1392, and to the death of some of the principal merchants belonging to it; but "the greatest cause of all was that many who had gotten vast riches began to be ashamed of the name of

traders, although to that they owed their fortunes, and allying with the nobility set up as quality," and neglected business in the usual way, when this happens. The most flourishing settlements went into decay, and were abandoned all save one, on the Isle of Sanaga, or what Labat calls the Niger, the river we now call the Senegal.[1]

This French settlement is to this day one of the main French ports in Africa, and it has remained in their possession, with the brief interval of falling into the hands of the English for a few months.

The Company that took over the enterprise of this Rouen and Dieppe Association in 1664 was called the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales; it paid for the stock and rights of the previous Association the sum of 150,000 livres, and it had tremendous ambitions, for not only did it buy up the West African enterprise, but also the rights of the lords proprietors in the isles of Martinique, Guadaloupe, St. Christopher, Santa Cruz, and Maria Galanta in the West Indies. This Company came to a sad end when it had still thirty years of its charter to run; in 1673 it sold its remaining term of West African rights to a new Company called d'Afrique for 7,500 livres. Its West Indian possessions the king seized in 1674, and united them with the Crown.

Its successor, the Compagnie d'Afrique, started with its thirty years' charter, and all the great ambitions of its predecessor. The king gave it every assistance in the way of ships and troops to carry out its designs; and it availed itself of these, for finding its trade incommoded by the Dutch, who were then settled at Anguin and Goree in 1677, it got the king to remove the Dutch nuisance from Goree by an expedition under Count d'Estras, and in 1678, by an expedition of its own, under M. de Casse, it cleared the Dutch out of Anguin.

This Company also made many treaties with the

[1] Labat. At present the Isle of St. Louis, and what is called the Niger, is the River Sanaga—or Senega and Senegal, as the French corrupt it.—Astley, 1745.

native chiefs. In 1679, by means of treaty with the chiefs of Rio Fresco, nowadays barbarously spelt Rufisque, and Portadali, now Portindal, and Joal, whose name is still uninjured, it acquired rights over all the territory between Cape Verde and the Gambia;[1] an exclusion from there of all other traders, and an exemption from all customs; and in addition to these enterprises it entered into a contract with the King of France to provide him with 2,000 negroes per annum for his West Indian Islands, and as many more as he might require for use in the galleys. Shortly after this the Compagnie d'Afrique expired in bankruptcy, compounding with its creditors at the rate of 5*s.* in the £, which I presume was paid mainly out of the 1,010,000 livres for which it sold its claim to its successors. The successors were a little difficult to find at first, for there seems to have been what one might call distaste for West African commercial enterprise among the French public just then. However, a Company was got together to buy up its rights, accept its responsibilities and carry on business in 1681.

In the matter of the Company that succeeded the d'Afrique, confusion is added to catastrophe, owing to the then Minister of State, M. Seignelay, for some private end, having divided up the funds and created two separate Companies—one to have the trade from Cape Blanco and the Gambia—the Compagnie du Senegal; the other to hold the rest of the Guinea trade to the Cape of Good Hope, the Compagnie du Guinea. This arrangement, of course, left the Senegal Company with all the responsibility of the Compagnie d'Afrique, and without sufficient funds to deal with them; and the Compagnie du Senegal complained, when, in 1694, it found its affairs in much confusion, throwing the blame on the Government; but, says Astley, "the great are seldom without excuses for what they do," and the division of the concession was persisted in, on the grounds that when the Company that succeeded d'Afrique was intact it failed to

[1] An extent of thirty leagues and six leagues within the land.—Labat, p. 19.

fulfil the Government contract of sending 2,000 negroes annually to the West Indies; and also that it had not imported as much gold from Africa as it might have done. Against this the Directors remonstrated loudly, saying that, within the two years and a half during which they had been responsible for exporting negroes to the West Indies, they had supplied 4,560 negroes, that the register of the Mint proved they had sent home in three years 400 marks of gold, and that it had cost them 400,000 livres to re-establish the trade of the Compagnie d'Afrique, for which they had already paid more than it was worth. All they got by these complaints was an extension of their trade rights from Gambia to Sierra Leone and a confirmation of their monopoly in exporting negroes to the French West Indies, and of their rights to Anguin and Goree, that is to say, a promise of Government assistance if those Dutch should come and attempt to reinstate themselves to the incommodation of French commerce.

All this however did not avail to make the Compagnie du Senegal flourish, so in 1694 it sold its remaining seventeen years of rights for 300,000 livres, to Sieur d'Apougny, one of the old Directors; and this enterprising man secured the assistance of eighteen new shareholders, and obtained from the Crown a new charter and started afresh under the name of the "Compagnie du Senegal, Cap Nord et Coté d'Afrique." It did not prosper; nevertheless it may be regarded as having produced the founder of modern Senegal, for it sent out to attend to its affairs, when things were in a grievous mess, one of the greatest men who have ever gone from Europe to Africa—namely Sieur Brüe.

The name of this Company of Sieur d'Apougny was d'Afrique; and the usual thing happened to it in 1709, when, for 250,000 livres, it made over its rights to a set of Rouen merchants, reserving, however, to itself the right of carrying on certain branches of the trade for which it held Government contracts; failing to carry these out they were taken from it and handed over to the Company of Rouen merchants,

who succumbed to their liabilities in 1717. Their rights were then bought up, for 1,600,000 livres, by the already established Mississippi Company of Paris, a company which survived until 1758.

In 1758 the English again captured St. Louis, the French main post in Senegal. In 1779 the French recaptured it, and it was ceded to them by England officially in the treaty of 1783. This was merely the usual kind of international amenity prevalent on the West Coast in those days. Dutch, French, English, Danes, Portuguese, and Courlanders would gallantly seize each other's property out there, while the respective Governments at home, if the matter were brought before their notice, and it was apparently worth their while, disowned all knowledge of their representatives' villanies and returned the booty to the prior owner on paper. The aggrieved Power then engaged in the difficult undertaking of regaining possession; the said original villain knowing little and caring less about the arrangements made on the point by his home Government. But just at this period England dealt French trade a frightful blow. The whole of her iniquity took the form of one John Law, a native of Edinburgh,[1] who raised himself to the dignity of comp-

[1] John Law was the eldest son of an Edinburgh goldsmith, born about 1681. "Bred to no business, but possessed of great abilities, and a fertile invention," he, when very young, recommended himself to the King's Ministers in Scotland to arrange fiscal matters, then in some confusion from the Union of the Kingdoms. His scheme, however, was not adopted. Great at giving other people good advice on money matters, he failed to manage his own. After a gay career in Edinburgh, and gaining himself the title of "Beau Law," he got mixed up in a duel, and fled to the Continent. He was banished from Venice and Genoa for draining the youth of those cities of their money, and wandered about Italy, living on gaming and singular bets and wagers. He proposed his scheme to the Duke of Savoy, who saw by this scheme he could soon, by deceiving his subjects in this manner, get the whole of the money of the kingdom into his possession; but as Law could not explain what would happen then, he was repulsed, and proceeded to Paris, where, under the patronage of the Duc d'Orleans, he found favour with Louis XIV. When his crash came he was exiled, and died in Venice in 1729.

troller-general of the finance of France by a specious scheme for a bank, an East India Company and a Mississippi Company, by the profits of which the French national debt was to be paid off, a thing then in urgent need of doing, and every one connected with the affair was to make their fortunes, an undertaking always in need of doing in any country. The French Government gave him every encouragement, and in 1716 he opened the bank; in 1719 the shares of that bank were worth more than eighty times the current specie in France: in 1720 the bank burst, spreading commercial ruin. To this may be ascribed the period of paralysis in the Senegal trade from 1719. The Compagnie de Senegal had handed over their interest to the Mississippi Company involved in John Law's bank scheme. After this, up to 1817, France, like F. M. the Duke of Wellington anent playing upon the harp, "had other things to do" than attend to West Africa. During the Napoleonic Wars England took all the French possessions in West Africa, but by the treaty of Paris of 1814 she handed back those in Senegal, save the Gambia. The French vessel sent out to take over the territory was the ill-starred and ill-navigated *Méduse*. Owing to her wreck it was not until 1817 that France replaced officially her standard on this Coast. On the 25th of January of that year, and represented by Colonel Smaltz, she again entered into possession of Goree and St. Louis in the mouth of the Senegal, which was practically all she had, and that was in a very unsatisfactory state. Colonel Smaltz, in 1819, had to come to an agreement with the Oulof chief of the St. Louis district to pay him a subsidy, but a mere catalogue of the wars between the French and the Oulofs is not necessary here; they were mutually unsatisfactory until there enters on the scene that second great founder of the French power in Africa, General Faidherbe, in 1854. Faidherbe is indeed the founder; but had it not been for Sieur Brüe and his travels far into the interior, and the evidence he collected regarding the riches therein, and of the general value of the country, it is not likely that,

as things were in 1854, France would have troubled herself so much about extending her power in Senegal.

Faidherbe was also one of those men who get possessed by a belief in the future of West Africa, regardless of any state of dilapidation they may find it in, and who have the power of infusing their enthusiasm into the minds of others; and he roused France to the importance of Senegal, saying prophetically, "Our possession on the West Coast of Africa is possibly the one of all our Colonies that has before it the greatest future, and it deserves the whole sympathy and attention of the Empire."

These were words more likely to inspire France or any other reasonable Power with a desire to give Senegal attention, than those used by the previous French visitor there, M. Sanguin, in 1785, who, speaking of the island of St. Louis, says it consists entirely of burning sands on whose barren surface you sometimes meet with scattered flints thrown out among their ballast by ships, and the ruins of buildings formerly erected by Europeans; but he remarks it is not surprising the sands are barren, for the air is so strongly impregnated with salt, which pervades everything and consumes even iron in a very short space of time. The heat he reports unpleasant, and rendered thus more so by the reflection from the sand. If the island were not all it might be, one might still hope for better things ashore on the mainland, but not according to M. Sanguin. The mainland is covered with sand and overrun with mangles, not the sort, you understand, that vulgar little English boys used to state their mothers had sold and invested the money in a barrel organ, but what we now call mangroves; then, mentioning that the St. Louis water supply was the cause of most of those maladies which carry off the Europeans so rapidly, that at the end of every three years the colony has a fresh set of inhabitants, M. Sanguin discourses on the charms of West African night entertainments in a most feeling and convincing way, stating that there was an infinity of gnats called mosquitoes, which exist in incredible quantities. He does not mind them himself, oh dear no!

being a sort of savage, he says, totally indifferent to the impression he may create on the fair sex, so that, if you please, he smears himself over with butter, which preserves him from the mosquitoes' impertinent stings. How he came by a sufficiency of butter for this purpose I won't pretend to know; but he knew mosquitoes, for impertinent is a perfect word for them. M. Sanguin, however, was not the sort of man, with all his ability and enterprise, to advertise Senegal successfully to France. Whatever Frenchman would care to go to a land where he needs must be sufficiently indifferent to the fair sex to smear himself with butter! Dire and awful dangers and miscellaneous horrors, even to being carried off by maladies among mangles in an atmosphere stiff with mosquitoes, but not that!

Now Faidherbe was different. Remember to the honour of the man he started with the above-described environment, but he took the grand tone and did not dwell on local imperfections; the burning sands of Senegal he mentioned, as all who know them are, by a natural constraint, forced, as Azurara would say, to do, but he said our intentions are pure and noble, our cause is just, the future cannot fail us;[1] and with such words, to his credit and to the credit of La France, he spoke to her heart; and he spoke truly, for with all its failures, with all the fearful loss of the lives of Frenchmen, Senegal is a grand thing, and it is a great thing for France, for from it has risen her masterdom over the Western Soudan—a work also inaugurated by Faidherbe, through his support of Lieutenant Maze, who reached the Niger. Practical in his work Faidherbe was also—by rebuilding the fort at Medina—the annexation of the Oulof country (1856); the institution of a battalion of natives Tirailleurs (1857); the telegraph line between St. Louis and Goree (1862); the construction of the harbour at Darkar and the erection of a first-class light-house at Cape Verde (1864); and the annexation of the kingdom of Cayore (1865). A grand record! and one that would be grander for France were it not

[1] *Notice de Senegal*, Paris, 1859, p. 99.

for the mismanagement that followed Faidherbe's rule in commercial and financial matters.

The want of financial success in her enterprise in West Africa is a matter that has constantly irritated France. She is continually saying: "English possessions on that Coast pay, why should not mine?" It is not my business to obtrude on her an answer, I merely dwell on the subject because I clearly see there are creeping nowadays into our own methods of managing Africa, those very same causes of financial failure that have afflicted her, namely, too high tariffs, too exaggerated views of the immediate profits to be got from those regions, and certain unfair methods of dealing with natives.

In attempting, however, to account for the trade from the French possessions in West Africa being proportionately so small to the immense area of country, the make of the country and its native inhabitants must be taken into consideration. Enormous districts of the French possessions are, to put it mildly, not fertile, and capable of producing in the way of a marketable commodity only gum, which is gathered from the stems of the acacia horrida. It is an excellent gum, and there is plenty of this acacia, and other gum-yielding acacias, but pickers are not so plentiful, particularly now French authorities object to native enterprise taking the form of raiding districts for slaves to employ in the industry. Other enormous districts, however, are as fertile as need be, and densely forested with forests rich in magnificent timber and rubber wealth. The inhabitants, a most important factor in the prosperity or otherwise of West African regions, are varied, but roughly speaking, we may say France possesses the whole of the tawny Moors, and tawny Moors have their good points and their bad. Their good point, from our present point of view, is their commercial enterprise. From the earliest historical account we have of them to the present day, it has been their habit to suck the trade out of the rich and fertile districts, carry it across the desert, and trade it with the white Moors, who, in their turn, carried it to the Mediterranean and Red Sea ports. The

opening of the West Coast seaboard trade, inaugurated by the Portuguese, has acted as a commercial loss to the tawny Moors during the past 400 years, and must be held, in a measure, accountable for the decay of the great towns of Timbuctoo, Jenne, Mele, and so on, though only in a measure, for herein comes the bad point of the inhabitants of the Western Soudan, from our point of view, namely, their devotion to religious differences and politics, which prevents their attending to business. As this state of internecine war came on about the same period as the opening to the black Moors and negroes of a market direct with European traders in the Bight of Benin, it hurried the tawny Moors to commercial decay. Timbuctoo never recovered the blow dealt her by the Moorish conquest in 1591. At the breaking up of the Empire of Askia the Great, revolt and war raged through the region, Jenne revolted in the west, an example followed by the Touaregs, Fulah and Malinkase tribes. Both north and south were thrown into confusion, and Timbuctoo, their intermediary, finding her commerce injured, rebelled in her turn. She was conquered and brutally repressed by the Moorish conquerors in 1594. A terrible dearth provoked by a lack of rain visited the town, and her inhabitants were reduced to eating the corpses of animals, and even of men. This was followed by the pestilence of 1618,[1] but through this arose any quantity of wars and upheavals of political authority among the tawny Moors in the early days of European intercourse with the West African Coast. They assumed a more acute, religious form in our own century, or to be more accurate just at the end of the eighteenth, when Shazkh Utham Danfodio arose among the Fulahs as a religious reformer, and a warrior missionary. He was a great man at both, but as a disturber of traffic still greater, a thing that cannot be urged to so great an extent against the other great Muslam missionary Umaru l'Haji. Still his gathering together an army of 20,000

[1] For an interesting account of Timbuctoo and its history, see *Timbuctoo the Mysterious*, by M. Felix Dubois. 1897.

men in 1854–55, and going about with them on a series of proselytizing expeditions against any tribe in the Upper Niger and Senegal region he found to be in an unconverted state, was little better than a nuisance to the French authorities at that time. Danfodio's affairs have fallen into the hands of England to arrange, and very efficiently her great representative in West Africa, the Royal Niger Company, has arranged them. But for our Danfodio and his consequences, France has had twenty, and she has dealt with them both gallantly and patiently. But there will always be, as far as one can see, trouble for France with her tawny Moors, now that the sources of their support are cut off from them by many of the districts they once drew their trade from—the sea-board districts of the Benin Bight, like Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Lagos, in the English Niger—being in the hands of a nation whose commercial instincts enable it to see the benefits of lower tariffs than France affects. Even were our tariffs to be raised to-morrow, the trade would again begin to drain back into the hands of its old owners, the tawny Moors, for the Western Soudan is being pacified by France. If some way is not devised of providing the tawny Moors with trade sufficient to keep them, things must go badly there, owing to the unfertility of the greater part of their country and the increase of the population arising from the pacification of the Western Soudan, which France is effecting. I will dwell no longer on this sketch of the history of the advance of France in Western Africa. We in England cannot judge it fairly. Nationally, her honour there is our disgrace; commercially, her presence is our ruin.

Two things only stand out from these generalisations. The Royal Niger Company shows how great England can be when she is incarnate in a great man, for the Royal Niger Company is so far Sir George Taubman-Goldie. The other thing that stands out unstained by comatose indifference to the worth of West Africa to England is her Commerce as represented by her West Coast traders, who have held on to the coast since the

sixteenth century with a bulldog grip, facing death and danger, fair weather and foul. Fine things both these two things are, but they do not understand each other; they would certainly not understand me regarding their affairs were I to talk from June to January, so I won't attempt to, but speak to the general public, who so far have understood neither Sir George Goldie, nor the West Coast trader, nor for the matter of that their mutual foe France, and I beg to say that France has not been so destructive an enemy to England there as England's own folly has been as incarnate in the parliamentary resolution of 1865; that the achievements of France in exploration in the Western Soudan make one of the grandest pages of all European efforts in Africa; that the influence of France over the natives has been, is, and, I believe, will remain good. "Our intentions are pure and noble, our cause is just, the future cannot fail us," said Faidherbe. So far as the natives are concerned, this has been the policy of France in Western Africa. So far as diplomatic relations with ourselves, humanly speaking, it has not; but diplomacy is diplomacy, and the amount of probity—justice—in diplomacy is a thing that would not at any period cover a threepenny-bit. It is a form of war that shows no blood, but which has not in it those things which sanctify red war, honour and chivalry. Nevertheless, diplomacy is an essential thing in this world; it does good work, it saves life, it increases prosperity, it advances the cause of religion and knowledge, and therefore the World must not be hard on it for its being—what it is. Personally, I prefer contemplating other things, and so I turn to commerce.

CHAPTER XII

COMMERCE IN WEST AFRICA

Concerning the reasons that deter this writer from entering here on a general history of the English, Dutch, and Portuguese in Western Africa; to which is added some attempt to survey the present state of affairs there.

LACK of space, not lack of interest, prevents me from sketching the careers of other nations in West Africa even so poorly as I have that of France; but the truth is, the material for the history of the other nations is so enormous that in order to present it with anything approaching clearness or fairness, folio volumes are required. I have a theory of the proper way to write the history of all European West African enterprises—a theory I shall endeavour to put into practice if I am ever cast ashore on an uninhabited island, with a suitable library, a hogshead of ink, a few tons of writing paper, accompanied by pens, and at least a quarter of a century of uninterrupted calm at my disposal. The theory itself is short, so I can state it here. Pay no attention to the nasty things they say about each other—it's the climate.

The history of the Portuguese occupation of West Africa is the great one. The material for its early geographico-historical side is in our hands, owing to the ability of Mr. Major and his devotion to the memory of Prince Henry the Navigator. But the history of

Portugal in West Africa from the days of the Navigator onwards wants writing. Sir A. B. Ellis fortunately gives us, in his history of the Gold Coast, an account of the part that Portugal played there, but, except for this region, you must hunt it up second-hand in the references made to it by prejudiced rivals, or in scattered Portuguese books and manuscripts. While as for the commercial history of Portugal in West Africa, although it has been an unbroken one from the fifteenth century to our own time, it has so far not been written at all. This seems to me all the more deplorable, because it is full of important lessons for those nations who are now attempting to exploit the regions she first brought them into contact with.

It must be noted, for one thing, that Portugal was the first European nation to tackle Africa in what is now by many people considered the legitimate way, namely, by direct governmental control. Other nations left West African affairs in the hands of companies of merchant adventurers and private individuals for centuries. Nevertheless, Portugal is nowadays unpopular among the other nations engaged in exploiting Africa. I shrink from embroiling myself in controversy, but I am bound to say I think she has become more unpopular on account of prejudice coupled with that strange moral phenomenon that makes men desirous of persuading themselves that a person they have treated badly deserves such treatment.

The more powerful European nations have dealt scandalously, from a moral standpoint, with Portugal in Africa. This one could regard calmly, it being in the nature of powerful nations to do this sort of thing, were it not for the airs they give themselves; and to hear them talking nowadays about Portugal's part in African history is enough to make the uninitiated imagine that the sweet innocent things have no past of their own, and never knew the price of black ivory.

"Oh, but that is all forgiven and forgotten, and Portugal is just what she always was at heart," you say. Well, Portugal at heart was never bad, as nations go.

Her slaving record is, in the point of humanity to the cargo, the best that any European nation can show who has a slaving West African past at all.

The thing she is taxed with nowadays mainly is that she does not develop her possessions. Developing African possessions is the fashion, so naturally Portugal, who persists on going about in crinoline and poke bonnet style, gets jeered at. This is right in a way, so long as we don't call it the high moral view and add to it libel. I own that my own knowledge of Portuguese possessions forces me to regard those possessions as in an unsatisfactory state from an imperialistic standpoint; a grant made by the home government for improvements, say roads, has a tendency to—well, not appear as a road. Some one—several people possibly—is all the better and happier for that grant; and after all if you do not pay your officials regularly, and they are not Englishmen, you must take the consequences. Even when an honest endeavour is made to tidy things up, a certain malign influence seems to dodge its footsteps in a Portuguese possession. For example, when I was out in '93, Portugal had been severely reminded by other nations that this was the Nineteenth Century. Bom Dios—Bother it, I suppose it is—says Portugal—must do something to smarten up dear Angola. She is over 400 now, and hasn't had any new frocks since the slave trade days; perhaps they are right, and it's time this dear child came out. So Loanda, Angola, was ordered street lamps—stylish things street lamps!—a telephone, and a water supply. Now, say what you please, Loanda is not only the finest, but the only, city in West Africa. "Lagos!" you ejaculate—"you don't know Lagos." I know I have not been ashore there; nevertheless I have contemplated that spot from the point of view of Lagos bar for more than thirty solid hours, to say nothing of seeing photographs of its details galore, and I repeat the above statement. Yet for all that, Loanda had no laid-on water supply nor public street lamps until she was well on in her 400th year, which was just before I first met her. During the past

she had had her water brought daily in boats from the Bengo River, and for street lighting she relied on the private enterprise of her citizens.[1] The reports given me on these endeavours to develop were as follows. As for the water in its laid-on state, it was held by the more aristocratic citizens to be unduly expensive (500 reis per cubic metre), and they grumbled. The general public, though holding the same opinion, did not confine their attention to grumbling. Stand-pipes had been put up in suitable places and an official told off to each stand-pipe to make a charge for water drawn. Water in West Africa is woman's palaver, and you may say what you please about the down-troddenness of African ladies elsewhere, but I maintain that the West African lady in the matter of getting what she wants is no discredit to the rest of the sex, black, white, or yellow. In this case the ladies wanted that water, but did not go so far as wanting to pay for it. In the history given to me it was evident to an unprejudiced observer that they first tried kindness to the guardian officials of the stand-pipes, but these men were of the St. Anthony breed, and it was no good. Checked, but not foiled, in their admirable purpose of domestic economy, those dear ladies laid about in their minds for other methods, and finally arranged that one of a party visiting a stand-pipe every morning should devote her time to scratching the official while the rest filled their water pots and hers. This ingenious plan was in working order when I was in Loanda, but since leaving it I do not know what modification it may have undergone, only I am sure that ultimately those ladies will win, for the African lady—at any rate the West Coast variety—is irresistible; as Livingstone truly remarked "They are worse than the men." In the street lamp matter I grieve to say that the story as given to me does not leave my own country blameless. Portugal ordered for Loanda a set of street lamps from England. She sent out a set of old gas

[1] Loanda has now a gas company, and the installation is well under way, under Belgian supervision.

[*To face page* 102.

CLIFFS AT LUANDA.

lamp standards. There being no gas in Loanda there was a pause until oil lamps to put in them came out. They ultimately arrived, but the P.W.D. failed to provide a ladder for the lamplighter. Hence that worthy had to swarm each individual lamp-post, a time-taking performance which normally landed him in the arms of Aurora before Loanda was lit for the night; but however this may be, I must own that Loanda's lights at night are a truly lovely sight, and its P.W.D.'s chimney a credit to the whole West Coast of Africa, to say nothing of its Observatory and the weather reports it so faithfully issues, so faithfully and so scientifically that it makes one deeply regret that Loanda has not got a climate that deserves them, but only one she might write down as dry and have done with it.

The present position of the Angola trade is interesting, instructive, and typical. I only venture to speak on it in so far as I can appeal to the statements of Mr. Nightingale, who is an excellent authority, having been long resident in Angola, and heir to the traditions of English enterprise there, so ably represented by the firm of Newton, Carnegie and Co. The trade of Ka Kongo, the province dependent on Angola, I need not mention, because its trade is conditioned by that of its neighbours Congo Français and the Congo Belge.

The interesting point—painfully interesting—is the supplanting of English manufactures, and the way in which the English shipping interest[1] at present suffers from the differential duties favouring the Portuguese line, the Empreza Nacional de Navigacão a Vapor. This line, on which I have had the honour of travelling, and consuming in lieu of other foods enough oil and olives for the rest of my natural life, is an admirable line. It shows a calm acquiescence in the ordinances of Fate, a general courteous gentleness, combined with

[1] Referring to cotton goods, the Foreign Office report on the trade of Angola for 1896 (1949) says the same cottons coming from Manchester would pay 250 reis per kilo in foreign bottoms, and 80 per cent. of 250 reis if coming in Portuguese bottoms and nationalised in Lisbon.

strong smells and the strain of stringed instruments, not to be found on other West Coast boats. It runs two steamers a month (6th and 23rd) from Lisbon, and they call at Madeira, St. Vincent, Santiago, Principe and San Thome Islands, Kabinda, San Antonio (Kongo), Ambriz, Loanda, Ambrizzette, Novo Redondo, Benguella, Mossamedes and Port Alexander, every alternate steamer calling at Liverpool. The other steamboat lines that visit Loanda are the African and British-African of Liverpool, which run monthly, in connection with the other South-West African ports; and the Woermann line from Hamburg. The French Chargeurs-Réunis started a line of steamers from Havre *via* Lisbon to Loanda, Madagascar, Delagoa Bay, touching at Capetown, when so disposed, but this line has discontinued calling in on Loanda. The other navigation for Angola is done by the Rio Quanza Company, which runs two steamers up that river as far as Dondo; but this industry, Dondo included, Mr. Nightingale states to be in a parlous state since the extension of the Royal Trans-African Railway Company[1] to Cazengo, "as all the coffee which previously came *via* Dondo by means of carriers, now comes by rail, the town of Dondo is almost deserted; the house property which a few years ago was valued at £200,000 sterling, to-day would not realise £10,000." I may remark in this connection, however, not to raise the British railway-material makers' feelings unduly, that all this railway's rolling stock and material is Belgian in origin. This seems to be the fate of African railways. I am told it is on account, for one thing, of the way in which the boilers of the English locomotives are set in, namely, too stiffly, whereby they suffer more over rough roads than the more loosely hung together foreign-made locomotives; and, for another, that English-made rolling stock is too heavy for rough roads, and that roads under the conditions in Africa cannot be

[1] Angola also has a small railway from Catumbella to Benguella, a distance of 15 kilom, and is contemplating constructing an important line from either Benguella or Mossamedes up to Caconda.

[To face page 244.

Dondo Angola.

otherwise than rough, &c. It is not, however, Belgian stuff alone that is competing and ousting our own from the markets of Angola. American machinery, owing to the personal enterprise of several American engineering firms, is supplying steam-engines and centrifugal pumps for working salt at Cucuaco, and machinery for dealing with sugar-cane. Mr. Nightingale says the cultivation of the sugar-cane is rapidly extending, for the sole purpose of making rum. The ambition of every small trader, after he has put a few hundreds of milreis together, is to become a fazendeiro (planter) and make rum, for which there is ever a ready sale. But regarding the machinery, Mr. Nightingale says: "Up to the present time no British firm has sent out a representative to this province. There is a fair demand for cane-crushing mills, steam engines and turbines. A representative of an American firm is out here for the third time within four years, and has done good business; and there is no reason why the British manufacturers should not do as well. The American machinery is inferior to British makes, and cheaper; but it sells well, which is the principal thing."

It is the same story throughout the Angola trade. No English matches come into its market. The Companhia de Mossemedes, which is only nominally Portuguese, and is worked by German capital, has obtained from the Government an enormous tract of country stretching to the Zambesi, with rights to cure fish and explore mines. Cartridges made in Holland, and an iron pier made in Belgium, an extinct trade in soap and a failing one in Manchester goods,[1] and gunpowder, are all sad items in Mr. Nightingale's lament. Small matters in themselves, you may think, but straws show which way the wind blows, and it blows against England's trade in every part of Africa not under England's flag. It would not, however, be fair to put down to differential tariffs alone our failing trade in Angola, be-

[1] The imports in 1896 from England being 978,745 kilos, against 2,644,455 in 1891—a difference of 1,665,710 kilos against Manchester.—*Foreign Office Annual Series, Consular Report, No.* 1949.

cause our successful competitors in hardware and gunpowder are other nations who have to face the same disadvantages—Germany, Holland, and Belgium. Portugal herself is now competing with the Manchester goods. She does so with well-made stuffs, but she is undoubtedly aided by her tariff. The consular report (1949) says: "The falling off in Manchester cotton since 1891 shows a diminution of 1,665,710 kilos. Cotton, if coming from Manchester via Lisbon, 1,665,710, duties 80 per cent, or 250 reis per kilo, equal 333,144 milreis (about £51,250); cotton coming from Portugal, 1,665,710 kilos, duties 25 reis per kilo, equal to 41,642 dollars, 750 reis (about £6,400), showing a difference in the receipts for one year of £44,850."

There is in this statement, I own, a certain obscurity, which has probably got into it from the editing of the home officials. I do not know if the 1,665,710 kilos, representing the difference between what England shipped to Angola in 1891 and what she shipped in 1896, was supplied in the latter years from Portugal of Portuguese manufacture; but assuming such to have been the case, the position from a tariff point of view would work out as follows: 1,665,710 kilos of cottons from Manchester would pay duty, at 250 reis per kilo, 416,427½ milreis. Taking the exchange at 3*s.* sterling per milreis, this amounts to £62,464. If this quantity of Manchester-made cottons had gone to Lisbon, and there become nationalised, and sent forward to Angola in Portuguese steamers, the duty would have been 80 per cent. of 250 reis per kilo, or say 333,142 milreis, equal to £49,971; but if this quantity were manufactured in Portugal, and shipped by Portuguese steamers, the duty would be 25 reis per kilo, equal to £6,246. The premium in favour of Portuguese production on this quantity is therefore £56,218, a terrific tax on the Portuguese subjects of Angola, for one year, in one class of manufactures only.

The deductions, however, that Mr. Nightingale draws from his figures in regard to Portugal and her province are quite clear. He says, "There is no doubt that the

(To face page 146.

TRADING STORES.

province of Angola is a very rich one. No advantages are held out for merchants to establish here, and thus bring capital into the place, which means more business, the opening up of roads, and the development of industries and agriculture. Generally the colony exists for the benefit of a few manufacturers in Portugal, who reap all the profit." Again, he says, "The merchants are much too highly taxed, a good fourth part of their capital is paid out in duties, with no certainty when it will be realised again. Angola, with plenty of capital, moderate taxes and low duties, might in a few years become a most flourishing colony."

Now here we come to the general problem of the fiscal arrangements suitable for an African colony; and as this is a subject of great importance to England in the administration of her colonies, and errors committed in it are serious errors, as demonstrated by the late war in Sierra Leone—the most serious even we have had for many years to deal with in West Africa—I must beg to be allowed to become diffuse, humbly stating that I do not wish to dogmatise on the matter, but merely to attract the attention of busy practical men to the question of the proper system to employ in the administration of tropical possessions. This seems to me a most important affair to England, now that she has taken up great territories and the responsibilities appertaining to them in that great tropical continent, Africa. There are other parts of the world where the suitability of the system of government to the conditions of the governed country is not so important.

It seems to me that the deeper down from the surface we can go the greater is our chance of understanding any matter; and I humbly ask you to make a dive and consider what reason European nations have for interfering with Africa at all. There are two distinct classes of reasons that justify one race of human beings interfering with another race. These classes are pretty nearly inextricably mixed; but if, like Mark Twain's horse and myself, you will lean against a wall and think, I fancy

you will see that primarily two classes of reasons exist —(*a*), the religious reason, the rescue of souls—a reason that is a duty to the religious man as keen as the rescue of a drowning man is to a brave one ; (*b*), pressure reasons. These pressure reasons are divisible into two sub-classes—(1) external; (2) internal. Now of external pressure reasons primarily we have none in Africa. The African hive has so far only swarmed on its own continent; it has not sent off swarms to settle down in the middle of Civilisation, and terrify, inconvenience, and sting it in a way that would justify Civilisation not only in destroying the invading swarm, but in hunting up the original hive and smoking it out to prevent a recurrence of the nuisance, as the Roman Empire was bound to try and do with its Barbarians. Such being the case,[1] we can leave this first pressure reason—the war justification—for interfering with the African—on one side, and turn to the other reason—the internal pressure reasons acting from within on the European nations. These are roughly divisible into three subclasses :—(1) the necessity of supplying restless and ambitious spirits with a field for enterprise during such times as they are not wanted for the defence of their nation in Europe —France's reason for acquiring Africa ; (2) population pressure ; (3) commercial pressure. The two latter have been the chief reason for the Teutonic nations, England and Germany overrunning the lands of other men. This Teutonic race is a strong one, with the habit, when in the least encouraged by Peace and Prosperity, of producing more men to the acre than the acre can keep. Being among themselves a kindly, common-sense race, it seems to them more reasonable to go and get more acres elsewhere than to kill themselves off down to a level which their own acres could support. The essential point about the " elsewhere " is that it should have a climate suited to the family. These migrations to other

[1] In saying this I am aware of the conduct of Carthage and of the Barbary Moors. But neither of these were primarily African. The one was instigated by Greece, the other by the Vandals and the Arabs.

[To face page 143.

St. Paul de Loanda.

countries made under the pressure of population usually take place along the line of least resistance, namely, into countries where the resident population is least able to resist the invasion, as in America and Australia; but occasionally, as in the case of Canada and the Cape, they follow the conquest of an European rival who was the pioneer in rescuing the country from savagery.

I am aware that this hardly bears out my statement that the Teutonic races are kindly, but as I have said "among themselves," we will leave it; and to other people, the original inhabitants of the countries they overflow, they are on the whole as kindly as you can expect family men to be. A distinguished Frenchman has stated that the father of a family is capable of anything; and it certainly looks as if he thought no more of stamping out the native than of stamping out any other kind of vermin that the country possessed to the detriment of his wife and children. I do not feel called upon to judge him and condemn, for no doubt the father of a family has his feelings; and as it must have been irritating to an ancestor of modern America to come home from an afternoon's fishing and find merely the remains of his homestead and bits of his family, it was more natural for him to go for the murderers than strive to start an Aborigines' Protection Society. Though why, caring for wife and child so much as he does, the Teuton should have gone and planted them, for example, in places reeking with Red Indians is a mystery to me. I am inclined to accept my French friend's explanation on this point, namely, that it arose from the Teuton being a little thick in the head and incapable of considering other factors beyond climate. But this may be merely thickness in my own head—a hopelessly Teutonic one.

However, the occupation of territory from population pressure in Europe we need not consider here; for it is not this reason that has led Europe to take an active interest in tropical Africa. It is a reason that comes into African affairs only—if really at all—in the extreme north and extreme south of the continent—Algeria and

the Cape. The vast regions of Africa from 30° N. to 20° S., have long been known not to possess a climate suitable for colonising in. "Men's blood rapidly putrefies under the tropic zone." "Tropical conditions favour the growth of pathogenic bacteria"—a rose called by another name. Anyhow, not the sort of country attractive to the father of a family to found a home in. Yet, as in spite of this, European nations are possessing themselves of this country with as much ardour as if it were a health resort and a gold mine in one, it is plain they must have another reason, and this reason is in the case of Germany and England primarily commercial pressure.

These two Teutonic nations have the same habit in their commercial production that they have in their human production—the habit of overdoing it for their own country; and just as Lancashire, for example, turns out more human beings than can comfortably exist there, so does she turn out more manufactured articles than can be consumed there; and just as the surplus population created by a strong race must find other lands to live in, so must the surplus manufactures of a strong race find other markets; both forms of surplus are to a strong race wealth.

The main difference between these things is that the surplus manufactured article is in no need of considering climate in the matter of its expansion. It stands in a relation to the man who goes out into the world with it akin to that of the wife and family to the colonist; the trader will no more meekly stand having his trade damaged than the colonist will stand having his family damaged; but at the same time, the mere fact that the climate destroys trade-stuff is, well, all the better for trade, and trade, moreover, leads the trader to view the native population from a different standpoint to that of the colonist. To that family man the native is a nuisance, sometimes a dangerous one, at the best an indifferent servant, who does not do his work half so well as in a decent climate he can do it himself. To the trader the native is quite a different thing, a customer. A dense native population is what the trader wants; and on their

wealth, prosperity, peace and industry, the success of his endeavours depends.

Now it seems to me that there are in this world two classes of regions attractive to the great European manufacturing nations, England and Germany, wherein they can foster and expand their surplus production of manufactured articles. (1) Such regions as India and China. (2) Such regions as Africa. The necessity of making this division comes from the difference between the native populations. In the first case you are dealing with a people who are manufacturers themselves, and you are selling your goods mainly against gold. In the second the people are not manufacturers themselves except in a very small degree, and you are selling your goods against raw material. In a bustling age like this there seems to be a tendency here and in Germany to value the first form of market above the second. I fail to see that this is a sound valuation. The education our commerce gives will in a comparatively short time transform the people of the first class of markets into rival producers of manufactured articles wherewith to supply the world's markets. We by our pacification of India have already made India a greater exporter than she was before our rule there. If China is opened up, things will be even worse for England and Germany; for the Chinese, with their great power of production, will produce manufactured articles which will fairly swamp the world's markets; for, sad to say, there is little doubt but they can take out of our hands all textile trade, and probably several other lines of trade that England, Germany, and America now hold. India and China being populated, the one by a set of people at sixes and sevens with each other, and the other by a set of people who, to put it mildly, are not born warriors, cannot, except under the dominion and protection of a powerful European nation, commercially prosper. But England and Germany are not everybody. There is France. I could quite imagine France, for example, in possession of China, managing it on similar lines to those on which she is now managing West Africa, but with

enormously different results to herself and the rest of the world. Her system of differential tariffs, be it granted, keeps her African possessions poor, and involves her in heavy imperial expenditure; but the Chinaman's industry would support the French system, and thrive under her jealous championship. This being the case, it is of value to England and Germany to hold as close a grip as possible over such regions as India and China, even though by so doing they are nourishing vipers in their commercial bosoms.

The case of the second class of markets—the tropical African—is different. Such markets are of enormous value to us; they are, especially the West African ones, regions of great natural riches in rubber, oil, timber, ivory, and minerals from gold to coal. They are in most places densely populated with customers for England's manufactured goods. The advantages of such a region to a manufacturing nation like ourselves are enormous: for not only do we get rid there of our manufactured goods, but we get, what is of equal value to our manufacturing classes, raw material at a cheap enough rate to enable the English manufacturers to turn out into the markets of the civilised world articles sufficiently cheap themselves to compete with those of other manufacturing nations.

The importance to us of such markets as Africa affords us seems to me to give us one sufficient reason for taking over these tropical African regions. I do not use the word justification in the matter, it is a word one has no right to use until we have demonstrated that our interference with the native population and our endeavours for our own population have ended in unmixed good; but it is a sound reason, as good a reason as we had in overrunning Australia and America. Indeed, I venture to think it is a better one, for the possession of a great market enables thousands of men, women and children to live in comfort and safety in England, instead of going away from home and all that home means; and this commercial reason—for all its not having a high falutin sound in it—is the one and only

In an Angola Market.

[*To face page 232.*

A Man of South Angola.

expansion reason we have that in itself desires the national peace and prosperity of the native races with whom it deals.

It seems to me no disgrace to England that her traders are the expanding force for her in Africa. There are three classes of men who are powers to a State—the soldier, the trader, and the scientist. Their efforts, when co-ordinated and directed by the true statesman—the religious man in the guise of philosopher and poet—make a great State. Being English, of course modesty prevents my saying that England is a great State. I content myself by saying that she is a truly great people, and will become a great State when she is led by a line of great statesmen—statesmen who are not only capable, as indeed most of our statesmen have been, of seeing the importance of India and the colonies, but also capable of seeing the equal importance to us of markets.

England's democracy must learn the true value of the markets that our fellow-countrymen have so long been striving to give her, and must appreciate the heroism those men have displayed, only too often unrequited, never half appreciated by the sea-wife, who "breeds a breed of rovin' men and casts them over sea." Those who go to make new homes for the old country in Australia and America do not feel her want of interest keenly; but those heroes of commerce who go to fight and die in fever-stricken lands for the sake of the old homes at home, do feel her want of interest.

I am not speaking hastily, nor have I only West Africa in my mind in this matter; there are other regions where we could have succeeded better, with advantage to all concerned—Malaya, British Guiana, New Guinea, the West Indies, as well as West Africa. If you examine the matter I think you will see that all these regions we have failed in are possessed of unhealthy climates, while the regions we have succeeded with are those possessed of healthy climates. The reason for this difference in our success seems to me to lie mainly in our deficiency of statesmanship at home. We really want the humid

tropic zone more than other nations do; a climate that eats up steel and hardware as a rabbit eats lettuces is an excellent customer to a hardware manufacturing town, &c. A region densely populated by native populations willing to give raw trade stuffs in exchange for cotton goods, which they bury or bang out on stones in the course of washing or otherwise actively help their local climate to consume, is invaluable to a textile manufacturing town. Yet it would be idle to pretend that our Government has realised these things. Our superior ability as manufacturers, and the great enterprise of our men who have gone out to conquer the markets of the tropics, have given us all the advantages we now enjoy from those markets, but they could do no more; and now, when we are confronted by the expansion of other European nations, those men and their work are being lost to England. Our fellow-countrymen will go anywhere and win anywhere to-day just as well as yesterday, where the climate of the region allows England to throw enough of them in at a time to hold it independent of the home government; but in places where we cannot do this, in the unhealthy tropical regions where those men want backing up against the aggression on their interests of foreign governments, well, up to the present they have not had that backing up, and hence we have lost to England in England the advantages we so easily might have secured.

An American magazine the other day announced in a shocked way that I could evidently "swear like a trooper!" I cannot think where it got the idea from; but really!—well of course I don't naturally wish to, but I cannot help feeling that if I could it would be a comfort to me; for when I am up in the great manufacturing towns, England properly so called, their looms and forges seem to me to sing the same song to the great maker of Fate—we must prosper or England dies. And there is but one thing they can prosper on—for there is but one feeding ground for them and all the thousands of English men, women and children dependent on them—the open market of the World. To me

the life blood of England is her trade. Her soul, her brain is made of other things, but they should not neglect or spurn the thing that feeds them—Commerce—any more than they should undervalue the thing that guards them—the warrior.

But, you will say, we will not be tied down to this commercial reason as England's reason for taking over the administration of tropical Africa. My friend, I really think on the whole you had better—it's reasonable. I grant that it has not been the reason why English missionaries and travellers have risked their lives for the good of Africa, or of human knowledge, but as a ground from which to develop a policy of administering the country this commercial one is good, because it requires as aforesaid the prosperity of the African population; and your laudable vanities in the matter I cannot respect, when I observe right in the middle of the map of Africa an enormous region called the Congo Free State. I have reason to believe that that region was opened up by Englishmen—Livingstone, Stanley, Speke, Grant and Burton. If you had been so truly keen on suppressing Arab slavery and native cannibalism, there was a paradise for you! Yet, you hand it over to some one else. Was it because you thought some one else could do it better? or—but we will leave that affair and turn to the consideration of the possibility of administering tropical Africa, governmentally, to the benefit of all concerned.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CROWN COLONY SYSTEM

Wherein it is set down briefly why it is necessary to enter upon this discussion at all.

NOW, you will say, Wherefore should the general public in England interest itself in this matter? Surely things are now governmentally administered in England's West African Colonies for the benefit of all parties concerned.

Well, that is just exactly and precisely what they are not. The system of Crown Colonies, when it is worked by Portuguese, does, at any rate, benefit some of the officials; but English officials are incapable of availing themselves of the opportunities this system offers them; and therefore, as this form of opportunity is the only benefit the thing can give any one, the sooner the Crown Colony system is removed from the sphere of practical politics and put under a glass case in the South Kensington Museum, labelled "Extinct," the better for every one.

I beg you, before we go further in this matter, to look round the world calmly, and then, when you have allowed the natural burst of enthusiasm concerning the extent and the magnificence of the British Empire to pass, you will observe that in the more unhealthy regions England has failed. I say she has failed because of the Crown Colony system—failed with them even during

days wherein she has had to face nothing like what she has to face to-day from the commercial competition of other nations.

In order to justify myself for holding the view that it is possible for any system of English administration to fail anywhere, I would draw your attention to the fact that the system used by us for governing unhealthy regions is the Crown Colony system. The two things go together, and we must assign one of them as the reason of our failure. You may, if it please you, put it down to the other thing, the unhealthiness. I cannot, for I know that no race of men can battle more gallantly with climate than the English—no other race of men has shown so great a capacity as we have to make the tropics pay. Still to-day we stand face to face with financial disaster in tropical regions.

If you will look through a list of England's tropical unhealthy possessions, leaving out West Africa, you will see nothing but depression. There are the West Indies, British Guiana, and British Honduras. All of these are naturally rich regions and accessible to the markets of the world. There is not one of them hemmed in by great mountain chains or surrounded by arid deserts, across which their products must be transported at enormous cost. They are all on our highway—the sea; nor are they sparsely populated. Their population, according to the latest Government returns, is 1,653,832, and this estimate is acknowledged to be necessarily imperfect and insufficient. But with all these advantages we find no prosperity there under our rule. Nothing but poverty and discontent and now pauperisation in the shape of grants from the Imperial Exchequer. You say, "Oh! but that is on account of the sugar bounties and the majority of the population not being English;" but that argument won't do. Look at the Canary Islands. They were just as hard hit by aniline dyes supplanting cochineal. Their population is not mainly English; but down on those islands came an Englishman, the Spanish Government had the sense to let him have his way, and that Englishman, Mr. A. L. Jones, of

Liverpool, has, in a space of only fifteen years, made those islands a source of wealth to Spain, instead of paupers on an Imperial bounty. "But," you say, "we have other regions under the Crown Colony system that are not West Indian." Granted, but look at them. There are the West African group; a group of three in the Mediterranean, Gibraltar, Malta, and Cyprus, two fortifications and a failure; away out East another group, which are prosperous from the fact that they are surrounded by countries whose fiscal arrangements are providentially worse than their own, and this seems to be the only condition which can keep a Crown Colony on its financial legs at all. For all our Crown Colonies adjacent to countries who can compete with them in trade matters are paupers, or their efficiency and value to the Empire is in the sphere of military and naval affairs, as posts and coaling stations. These possessions of the Gibraltar, Malta, and Hong Kong brand should be regarded as being part of our navy and army, and not confused with colonies, though essential to them.

"Still," you say, "you are forgetting Ceylon, the Fiji Islands, the Falklands, and the Mauritius." I am not. Ceylon is part of India and practically an Indian province, so is out of my arguments. I present you with the others wherefrom to build up a defence of the Crown Colony system. Say, "See the Falklands off Cape Horn, with a population of 1,789, and heaps of sheep and a satisfactory budget." I can say nothing against them, and may possibly be forced to admit that for such a region, off Cape Horn, and with a population mainly of sheep, the Crown Colony system may be a Heaven-sent form of administration. But I think England would be wiser if she looked carefully at the West Indian group and recognised how like their conditions are to those of the West African group, for in their disastrous state of financial affairs you have an object lesson teaching what will be the fate of Crown Colonies in West Africa—Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Lagos—if she will not be warned in time to alter the system at present employed for governing these

possessions. It is an object lesson in miniature of what will otherwise be an infinitely greater drain on the resources of England, for West Africa is immensely larger, immensely more densely populated, and immensely more deadly in climate than the West Indies. For one Englishman killed by the West Indies, West Africa will want ten; for every £1,000, £20,000—and all for what? Only for the sake of a system—a system intrinsically alien to all English ideals of government—a system that doddered along until Mr. Chamberlain expected it to work and then burst out all over in rows, and was found to be costing some 25 per cent. of the entire bulk of white trade with West Africa; a system that, let the land itself be ever so rich, can lead to nothing but heart-breaking failure.

Now I own the Crown Colony system looks well on paper. It consists of a Governor, appointed by the Colonial Office, supported by an Executive and Legislative Council (both nominated), and on the Gold Coast with two unofficial members in the legislative body. These Councils, as far as the influence they have, are dead letters, and legislation is in the hands of the Governor. This is no evil in itself. You will get nothing done in tropical Africa except under the influence of individual men; but your West African Governor, though not controlled by the Councils within the colony, is controlled by a power outside the colony, namely, the Colonial Office in London. Up to our own day the Colonial Office has been, except in the details of domestic colonial affairs, a drag-chain on English development in Western Africa. It has not even been indifferent, but distinctly, deliberately adverse. In the year 1865 a Select Committee of the House of Commons inquired into and reported upon the state of British establishments on the western coast of Africa. "It was a strong Committee, and the report was brief and decided. Recognising that it is not possible to withdraw the British Government wholly or immediately from any settlements or engagements on the West African Coast, the Committee laid down that all

further extension of territory or assumption of government, or new treaties offering any protection to native tribes, would be inexpedient, and that the object of our policy should be to encourage in the natives the exercise of those qualities which may render it possible for us more and more to transfer to them the administration of all the governments with a view to the ultimate withdrawal from all, except, perhaps, Sierra Leone."[1]

Remember also this. This one in 1865 was not the first of those sort of fits the Colonial Office had in West African affairs. It was just as bad after the Battle of Katamansu in 1827, and had it not been for the English traders our honour to the natives we had made treaties with would have been destroyed, and the Gold Coast lost whole and entire.

This policy of 1865 has remained the policy of the English Government towards West Africa up to 1894. In spite of it, the English have held on. Governor after Governor, who, as soon as he became acquainted with the nature of the region, has striven to rouse official apathy, has been held in, and his spirit of enterprise broken by official snubs, and has been taught that keeping quiet was what he was required to do. It broke many a man's heart to do it; but doing it worked no active evil on the colony under his control, the affairs of which financially prospered in the hands of the trading community so well, that not only had no West African colony any public debt, except Sierra Leone, which was a philanthropic station, but the Gold Coast, for example, had sufficient surplus to lend money to colonies in other parts of the world. But at last the time came when the aggression on Africa by the Continental powers fulfilled all the gloomy prophecies which the merchants of Liverpool had long been uttering; and one possession of ours in West Africa after another felt the effects of the activity of other nations and the apathy of our own. They would have felt it in vain,

[1] See Lucas's *Historical Geography of the British Colonies*, Oxford, 1894.

and have utterly succumbed to it, had it not been for two Englishmen. Sir George Taubman-Goldie, who, when in West Africa on a voyage of exploration, recognised the possibilities of the Niger regions, and secured them for England in the face of great difficulties; and Mr. Chamberlain. Concerning Sir George Goldie's efforts in securing a most important section of West Africa for England, I shall have occasion to speak later. Concerning Mr. Chamberlain, I may as well speak now; but be it understood, both these men, whatever their own ideas on their work may be, were men who came up at a critical point to reinforce Liverpool and Bristol and London merchants, who had fought for centuries—not to put too fine a point on it—from the days of Edward IV. for the richest feeding grounds in all the world for England's manufacturing millions. The dissensions, distrust and misunderstandings which have raged among these three representatives of England's majesty and power, are no affair of mine, as a mere general student of the whole affair, beyond the due allowance one must make for the grave mischief worked by the human factors. Well, as aforesaid, Mr. Chamberlain alone of all our statesmen saw the great possibilities and importance of Western Africa, and thinking to realise them, forthwith inaugurated a policy which, if it had had sound ground to go on, would have succeeded. It had not, it had the Crown Colony system — and our hope for West Africa is that so powerful a man as he has shown himself to be in other political fields, may show himself to be yet more powerful, and formulate a totally new system suited for the conditions of West Africa, and not content himself with the old fallacy of ascribing failure to the individuals, white or black, government official or merchant or missionary, who act under the system which alone is to blame for England's present position in West Africa; but I own that if Mr. Chamberlain does this he will be greater than one man can ever be reasonably be expected to be, and again it is, I fear, not possible to undo what has been done by the resolution of 1865.

Possibly the greatest evil worked by this resolution has been the alienation of sympathy between the Merchants and the Government. Since 1865 these two English factors have been working really against each other. Possibly the greatest touch of irony in modern politics is to be found in a despatch dated March 30th, 1892, addressed to the British Ambassador at Paris, wherein it is said, "The colonial policy of Great Britain and France in West Africa has been widely different. France from her basis on the Senegal coast has pursued steadily the aim of establishing herself on the Upper Niger and its affluents; this object she has attained by a large and constant expenditure, and by a succession of military expeditions. Great Britain, on the other hand, has adopted the policy of advance by commercial enterprise; she has not attempted to compete with the military operations of her neighbour."[1] I should rather think she hadn't! Let alone the fact that France did not expand mainly by military operations, but through magnificent explorers backed up by sound sense. While, as for Great Britain "adopting the policy of advance by commercial enterprise"—well, I don't know what the writer of that despatch's ideas on "adoption" are, but suppression would be the truer word. Had Great Britain given even her countenance to "commercial enterprise," she would by now have given it representation in her councils for West Africa, a thing it has not yet got. True, there is the machinery for this representation ready in the Chambers of Commerce, but these Chambers have no real power whatsoever as far as West African affairs are concerned; they are graciously permitted to send deputations to the Colonial Office and write letters when they feel so disposed, but practically that is all.

Truly it is a ridiculous situation, because West Africa matters to no party in England so much as it matters to the mercantile. I am aware I shall be told that it is impossible that one section of Englishmen can have a greater interest in any part of the Empire than another section, and, for example, that West Africa

[1] Parliamentary Paper, C 6701, 92.

matters quite as much to the religious party as it does to the mercantile. But, to my mind, neither Religion nor Science is truly concerned in the political aspect of West Africa. It should not matter, for example, to the missionary whether he works under one European Government or another, or a purely native Government, so long as he is allowed by that Government to carry on his work of evangelisation unhindered; nor, similarly, does it matter to the scientific man, so long as he is allowed to carry on his work; but to the merchant it matters profoundly whether West Africa is under English or foreign rule, and whether our rule there is well ordered. For one thing, on the merchants of West Africa falls entirely the duty of supplying the revenue which supports the government of our colonies there; and for another, it seems to me that, whether the Government he is under is English or no, does matter very much to the English merchant. His duty as an Englishman is the support of the population of his own country, especially the support of its manufacturing classes. Everything that tends to alienate his influence from the service of his fellow-countrymen is a degradation to him. He may be individually as successful in trading with foreign-made goods, but as a member of the English State he is at a lower level when he does so; he becomes a mere mercenary in the service of a foreign power engaged in adding to the prosperity of an alien nation. Again, in this matter the difference between the religious man and the commercial shows up clearly. Let the religion of the missionary be what it may, his aim is according to it to secure the salvation of the human race. What does it matter to him whether the section of the human race he strives to save be black, white, or yellow? Nothing; as the noble records of missions will show you. Therefore I repeat that West Africa matters to no party in the English State so much as it matters to the mercantile. With no other party are true English interests so closely bound up.

West Africa probably will never be a pleasant place

wherein to spend the winter months, a holiday ground that will serve to recuperate the jaded energies of our poets and painters, like the Alps or Italy; probably, likewise, it will never be a place where we can ship our overflow population; and for the same reason—its unhealthiness—it will be of no use to us as a military academy, for troops are none the better for soaking in malaria and operating against ill-armed antagonists. But West Africa is of immense use to us as a feeding-ground for our manufacturing classes. It could be of as much value to England as a healthy colony, but in a reverse way, for it could supply the wealth which would enable them to remain in England in place of leaving it, if it were properly managed with this definite end in view. It is idle to imagine that it can be properly managed unless commercial experts are represented in the Government which controls its administration, as is not the case at present. It is no case of abusing the men who at present strive to do their best with it. They do not set themselves up as knowing much about trade, and they constantly demonstrate that they do not. Armed with absolutely no definite policy, subsisting on official and non-expert trade opinion, they drift along, with some nebulous sort of notion in their heads about "elevating the African in the plane of civilisation."

Now, of course, there exists a passable reason for things being as they are in our administration of West Africa. England is never malign in intention, and neve rushes headlong into a line of policy. Therefore, in order to comprehend how it has come about that she should have a system so unsuited to the regions to which it is applied, as the Crown Colony system is unsuited to West Africa, we must calmly investigate the reason that underlies this affair. This reason, which is the cause of all the trouble, is a misconception of the nature of West Africa, and it must be considered under two heads.

The thing behind the resolution of 1865 is the undoubted fact that West Africa is no good for a Colony from its unhealthiness. There is no one who knows

the Coast but will grant this; but surely there is nc one who knows, not only the West Coast of Africa but also the necessities of our working classes in England, who can fail to recognise that this is only half an argument against England holding West Africa; because we want something besides regions whereto we can send away from England men and women, namely, we want regions that will enable us to keep the very backbone of England, our manufacturing classes, in a state of healthy comfort and prosperity at home in England, in other words, we want markets.

Alas! in England the necessity for things grows up in a dumb way, though providentially it is irresistibly powerful; once aroused it forces our statesmen to find the required thing, which they with but bad grace and grievous groans proceed leisurely to do.

This is pretty much the same as saying that the English are deficient in statesmanship, and this is what I mean, and I am convinced that no other nation but our own could have prospered with so much of this imperfection; but remember it is an imperfection, and is not a thing to be proud of any more than a stammer. External conditions have enabled England so far barely to feel her drawback, but now external conditions are in a different phase, and she must choose between acquiring statesmanship competent to cope with this phase, or drift on in her present way until the force of her necessities projects her into an European war. A perfectly unnecessary conclusion to the pressure of commercial competition she is beginning to feel, but none the less inevitable with her present lack of statecraft.

The second part of the reason of England's trouble in West Africa is that other fallacious half reason which our statesmen have for years been using to soothe the minds of those who urged on her in good time the necessity for acquiring the hinterlands of West Africa, namely, "After all, England holds the key of them in holding the outlets of the rivers." And while our statesmen have been saying this, France has been

industriously changing the lock on the door by diverting trade routes from the hinterland she has so gallantly acquired, down into those seaboard districts which she possesses.

"Well, well, well," you will say, "we have woke up at last, we can be trusted now." I own I do not see why you should expect to be suddenly trusted by the men with whose interests you have played so long. I remember hearing about a missionary gentleman who was told a long story by the father of a bad son, who for years went gallivanting about West Africa, bringing the family into disrepute, and running up debts in all directions, and finally returned to the paternal roof. "Dear me! how interesting," said the missionary; "quite the Parable of the Prodigal Son! I trust, my friend, you remembered it, and killed the fatted calf on his return?" "No, Sar," said the parent; "but I dam near kill that ar prodigal son."

CHAPTER XIV

THE CROWN COLONY SYSTEM IN WEST AFRICA

Wherein is set down briefly in what manner of ways the Crown Colony system works evil in Western Africa.

I HAVE attempted to state that the Crown Colony system is unsuited for governing Western Africa, and have attributed its malign influence to its being a system which primarily expresses the opinions of well-intentioned but ill-informed officials at home, instead of being, according to the usual English type of institution, representative of the interests of the people who are governed, and of those who have the largest stake in the countries controlled by it—the merchants and manufacturing classes of England. It remains to point out how it acts adversely to the prosperity of all concerned ; for be it clearly understood there is no corruption in it whatsoever : there is waste of men's lives, moneys, and careers, but nothing more at present. By and by it will add to its other charms and functions that of being, in the early future, a sort of patent and successful incubator for hatching a fine lively brood of little Englanders, who will cry out, "What is the good of West Africa?" and so forth ; and they will seem sweetly reasonable, because by then West Africa will be down on the English rates, a pauper.

It may seem inconceivable, however, that the present governing body of West Africa, the home officials, and the English public as represented in Parliament, can be ill-informed. West Africa has not been just shot up out

of the ocean by a submarine volcanic explosion; nor are we landing on it out of Noah's ark, for the thing has been in touch with Europe since the fifteenth century; yet, inconceivable as it may seem that there is not by now formulated and in working order a method of governing it suitable for its nature, the fact that this is so remains, and providentially for us it is quite easy of explanation without abusing any one; though no humane person, like myself for example, can avoid sincerely hoping that Mr. Kipling is wrong when he sings

"Deep in all dishonour have we stained our garments' hem.
Yet be ye not dismayed, we have stumbled and have strayed.
Our leaders went from righteousness, the Lord will deal with them."

For although it is true that we have made a mess of this great feeding ground for England's manufacturing millions; yet there are no leaders on whom blame alone can fall, whom we can make scapegoats out of, who can be driven away into the wilderness carrying the sins of the people. The blame lies among all those classes of people who have had personally to deal with West Africa and the present system; and the Crown Colony system and the resolution of '65 are merely the necessary fungi of rotten stuff, for they have arisen from the information that has been, and has not been, placed at the disposal of our Government in England by the Government officials of West Africa, the Missionaries, and the Traders.

We will take the traders' blame first—their contribution to the evil dates from about 1827, and consists in omission—frankly, I think that they, in their generation, were justified in not telling all they could tell about the Coast. They found they could get on with it, keep it quiet and manage the natives fairly well under the system of Courts of Equity in the Rivers, and the Committee of merchants with a Governor approved of by the Home Government, which was working on the Gold Coast up to 1843. In 1841 there arose the affair of Governor Maclean, and the inauguration of the line of policy which resulted in the resolution of 1865. The governmental officials

having cut themselves off from the traders and taken over West Africa, failed to manage West Africa, and so resolved that West Africa was not worth managing —a thing they are bound to do again.

The abuse showered on the merchants, and the terrific snubs with which the Government peppered them, did not make the traders blossom and expand, and shower information on those who criticised them—there are some natures that are not sweetened by Adversity. Moreover, the Government, when affairs had been taken over by the Offices in London, took the abhorrent form of Customs, and displayed a lively love of the missionary-made African, as he was then—you can read about him in Burton [1]—and for the rest got up rows with the traders' best customer, the untutored African; rows, as the traders held, unnecessary in their beginning and feeble-handed in their termination. The whole of this sort of thing made the trader section keep all the valuable information to itself, and spend its energies in eluding the Customs, and talking what Burton terms "Commercial English."

Then we come to the contribution made by the Government officials to the formation of an erroneous opinion concerning the state of affairs in West Africa. This arose from the conditions that surrounded them there, and the way in which they were unable, even if they desired, to expand their influence, distrusted naturally enough by the trading community since 1865, held in continuously by their home instructions, and unprovided with a sufficient supply of men or money on shore to go in for empire making, and also villainously badly quartered—as you can see by reading Ellis's *West African Sketches*. It is small wonder and small blame to them that their account of West Africa has been a gloomy one, and such it must remain until these men are under a different system: for all the reasons that during the past have caused them to paint the Coast as a place of no value to England, remain still in full force—as you can see by studying the disadvantages

[1] *Wanderings in West Africa*, vol. i. 1863.

that service in a West African Crown Colony presents to-day to a civilian official.

Firstly, the climate is unhealthy, so that the usual make of Englishman does not like to take his wife out to the Coast with him. This means keeping two homes, which is expensive, and it gives a man no chance of saving money on an income say of £600 a year, for the official's life in West Africa is necessarily, let him be as economical as he may, an expensive one; and, moreover, things are not made more cheerful for him by his knowing that if he dies there will be no pension for his wife.

Secondly, there being no regular West African Service, there is no security for promotion; owing to the unhealthiness of the climate it is very properly ordained that each officer shall serve a year on the Coast, and then go home on a six months' furlough. It is a fairly common thing for a man to die before his twelve months' term is up, and a still more common one for him to have to go on sick leave. Of course, the moment he is off, some junior official has to take his place and do his work. But in the event of the man whose work he does dying, gaining a position in another region, or promotion, the man who has been doing the work has no reason to hope he will step into the full emoluments and honours of the appointment, although experience will thus have given him an insight into the work. On the contrary, it too often happens that some new man, either fresh from London or who has already held a Government appointment in some totally different region to the West African, is placed in the appointment. If this new man is fresh to such work as he has to do, the displaced man has to teach him; if he is from a different region, he usually won't be taught, and he does not help to develop a spirit of general brotherly love and affection in the local governmental circles by the frank statement that he considers West African officials "jugginses" or "muffs," although he freely offers to "alter this and show them how things ought to be done."

Then again the civilian official frequently complains

that he has no such recognition given him for his services as is given to the military men in West Africa. I have so often heard the complaint, "Oh, if a man comes here and burns half a dozen villages he gets honours; while I, who keep the villages from wanting burning, get nothing;" and, mind you, this is true. Like the rest of my sex I suffer from a chronic form of scarlet fever, and, from a knowledge of the country there, I hold it rubbish to talk of the brutality of mowing down savages with a Maxim gun when it comes to talking of West African bush fighting; for your West African is not an unarmed savage, he does not assemble in the manner of Dr. Watts's ants, but wisely ensconces himself in the pleached arbours of his native land, and lets fly at you with a horrid scatter gun. This is bound to hit, and when it hits makes wounds worse than those made by a Maxim; in fact he quite turns bush fighting into a legitimate sport, let alone the service done him by his great ally, the climate. Still, it is hard on the civilian, and bad for English interests in West Africa that the man who by his judgment, sympathy, and care, keeps a district at peace, should have less recognition than one who, acting under orders, doing his duty gallantly, and all that, goes and breaks up all native prosperity and white trade.

All these things acting together produce on the local Government official a fervid desire to get home to England, or obtain an appointment in some other region than the West Coast. I feel sure I am well within the mark when I say that two-thirds of the present Government officials in the West African English Crown Colonies have their names down on the transfer list, or are trying to get them there; and this sort of thing simply cannot give them an enthusiasm for their work sufficient to ensure its success, and of course leads to their painting a dismal picture of West Africa itself.

I am perfectly well aware that the conditions of life of officials in West Africa are better than those described by Ellis. Nevertheless, they are not yet what they should be: a corrugated iron house may cost a

heap of money and yet not be a Paradise. I am also aware that the houses and general supplies given to our officials are immensely more luxurious than those given to German or French officials; but this does not compensate for the horrors of boredom suffused with irritation to which the English official is subjected. More than half the quarrelling and discontent for which English officials are celebrated, and which are attributed to drink and the climate, simply arise from the domestic arrangements enforced on them in Coast towns, whereby they see far too much of each other. If you take any set of men and make them live together, day out and day in, without sufficient exercise, without interest in outside affairs, without dividing them up into regular grades of rank, as men are on board ship or in barracks, you are simply bound to have them dividing up into cliques that quarrel; the things they quarrel over may seem to an outsider miserably petty, but these quarrels are the characteristic eruption of the fever discontent. And may I ask you if the opinion of men in such a state is an opinion on which a sound policy wherewith to deal with so complex a region can be formed? I think not, yet these men and the next class alone are the makers of our present policy—the instructors of home official opinion.

The next class is the philanthropic party. It is commonly confused with the missionary, but there is this fundamental difference between them. The missionary, pure and simple, is a man who loves God more than he loves himself, or any man. His service (I am speaking on fundamental lines, as far as I can see) is to place in God's charge, for the glory of God, souls that, according to his belief, would otherwise go elsewhere. The philanthropist is a person who loves man; but he or she is frequently no better than people who kill lapdogs by over-feeding, or who shut up skylarks in cages; while it is quite conceivable to me, for example, that a missionary could kill a man to save his soul, a philanthropist kills his soul to save his life, and there is in this a difference. I have never been able to get up any respectful

enthusiasm for the so-called philanthropist, so that I have to speak of him with calm care; not as I have spoken of the missionary, feeling he was a person I could not really harm by criticising his methods.

It is, however, nowadays hopeless to attempt to separate these two species, distinct as I believe them to be; and they together undoubtedly constitute what is called the Mission party not only in England but in Germany. I believe this alliance has done immense harm to the true missionary, for to it I trace that tendency to harp upon horrors and general sensationalism which so sharply differentiates the modern from the classic missionary reports. Take up that noble story of Dennis de Carli and Michael Angelo of Gattina, and read it through, and then turn on to wise, clear-headed Merolla da Sorrento, and read him; you find there no sensationalism. Now and again, when deeply tried, they will say, "These people live after a beastly manner, and converse freely with the Devil," but you soon find them saying, "Among these people there are some excellent customs," and they give you full details of them, with evident satisfaction. You see it did not fundamentally matter to these early missionaries whether their prospective converts "had excellent customs" or "lived after a beastly manner," from a religious standpoint. Not one atom—they were the sort of men who would have gone for Plato, Socrates, and all the Classics gaily, holding that they were not Christians as they ought to be; but this never caused them to paint a distorted portrait of the African. This thing, I believe, the modern philanthropist has induced the modern missionary only too frequently to do, and the other regrettable element which has induced him to do it has been the apathy of the English public, a public which unless it were stirred up by horrors would not subscribe. Again the blame is with England at home, but the harm done is paid for in West Africa. The portrait painted of the African by the majority, not all, but the majority of West African mission reports, has been that of a child, naturally innocent, led away and cheated by white

traders and grievously oppressed by his own rulers. I grant you, the African taken as a whole is the gentlest kind of real human being that is made. I do not however class him with races who carry gentleness to a morbid extent, and for governmental purposes you must not with any race rely on their main characteristic alone; for example, Englishmen are honest, yet still we require the police force.

The evil worked by what we must call the missionary party is almost incalculable; from it has arisen the estrangement of English interests, as represented by our reason for adding West Africa to our Empire at all—the trader—and the English Government as represented by the Crown Colony system; and it has also led to our present policy of destroying powerful native States and the power of the African ruling classes at large. Secondarily it is the cause of our wars in West Africa. That this has not been and is not the desire of the mission party it is needless to say; that the blame is directly due to the Crown Colony system it is as needless to remark; for any reasonable system of its age would long ere now have known the African at first hand, not as it knows him, and knows him only, at its head-quarters, London, from second-hand vitiated reports. It has, nowadays, at its service the common sense and humane opinions of the English trade lords as represented by the Chambers of Commerce of Liverpool and Manchester; but though just at present it listens to what they say—thanks to Mr. Chamberlain—yet it cannot act on their statements, but only querulously says, "Your information does not agree with our information." Allah forbid that the information of the party with whom I have had the honour to be classed should agree with that sort of information from other sources; and I would naturally desire the rulers of West Africa to recognise the benefit they now enjoy of having information of a brand that has not led to such a thing as the Sierra Leone outbreak for example, and to remember in this instance that six months before the hut tax there was put on, the Chambers had strongly advised the Government

against it, and had received in reply the answer that "The Secretary of State sees no reason to suppose that the hut tax will be oppressive, or that it will be less easy to collect in Sierra Leone than in Gambia." Why, you could not get a prophetic almanac into a second issue if it were not based on truer knowledge than that which made it possible for such a thing to be said. Nevertheless, no doubt this remarkable sentence was written believing the same to be true, and confiding in the information in the hands of the Colonial Office from the official and philanthropic sources in which the Office believes.

CHAPTER XV

MORE OF THE CROWN COLONY SYSTEM

Wherein is set down the other, or main, reason against this system.

HAVING attempted to explain the internal evils or what one might call the domestic rows of the Crown Colony system, I will pass on to the external evils—which although in a measure consequent on the internal are not entirely so, and this point cannot be too clearly borne in mind. Tinker it up as you may, the system will remain one pre-eminently unsuited for the administration of West Africa.

You might arrange that officials working under it should be treated better than the official now is, and the West African service be brought into line in honour with the Indian, and afford a man a good sound career. You might arrange for the Chambers of Commerce, representing the commercial factor, to have a place in Colonial Office councils. But if you did these things the Crown Colony system would still remain unsuited to West Africa, because it is a system intrinsically too expensive in men and money, so that the more you develop it the more expensive it becomes. Concerning this system as applied to the West Indies a West Indian authority the other day said it was putting an elephant to draw a goat chaise; concerning the West African application of it, I should say it was trying to open a tin case with a tortoise-shell paper knife. Of

course you will say I am no authority, and you must choose between those who will tell you that only a little patience is required, and the result of the present governmental system in West Africa will blossom into philanthropic and financial successes, and me, who say it cannot do so, but must result in making West Africa a debt-ridden curse to England. All I can say for myself is, that I am animated by no dislike to any set of men and without one farthing's financial interest in West Africa. It would not affect my income if you were to put 100 per cent. ad valorem duty on every trade article in use on the Coast and flood the Coast with officials, paid as men should be paid who have to go there, namely, at least three times more than they are at present. My dislike to the present state of affairs is solely a dislike to seeing my country, to my mind, make a fool of herself, wasting men's lives in the process and deluding herself with the idea that the performance will repay her.

Personally, I cannot avoid thinking that before you cast yourself in a whole-souled way into developing anything, you should have a knowledge of the nature of the thing as it is on scientific lines. Education and development unless backed by this knowledge are liable to be thrown away, or to produce results you have no use for. I remember a distressing case that occurred in West Africa which supports my opinion. A valued friend of mine, a seaman of great knowledge and experience, yet lacking in that critical spirit which inquires into the nature of things before proceeding with them, confident alone in the rectitude of his own intentions, bought a canary bird at a Canary Island. He knew that the men who sell canaries down there are up to the sample description of deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. So he brought to bear upon the transaction a deal of subtlety, but neglected fundamental facts, whereby his triumph at having, on the whole, done the canary seller brown by getting him to take in part value for the bird a box of German colonial-grown cigars, was vanity. For weeks that gallant seaman rubbed a wet

cork up and down an empty whisky bottle within the hearing of the bird, which is the proper thing to do providing things are all right in themselves, and yet nothing beyond genial twitterings rewarded his exertions. So he rubbed on for another week with even greater feeling and persuasive power, and then, to drop a veil upon this tragedy of lost endeavour, that canary laid an egg. Now, if that man had only attended to the nature of things and seen whether it were a cock or hen bird, he would not have been subjected to this grievous disappointment. Similarly, it seems to me, we are, from the governmental point of view, like that sea captain—swimming about in the West African affair with a lot of subtle details, in an atmosphere of good intentions, but not in touch with important facts; we are acting logically from faulty premises.

Now, let us grant that the Crown Colony system is not fully developed in West Africa, for if it were, you may say, it would work all right; though this I consider a most dangerous idea. Let us see what it would be if it were fully developed.

Mr. St. Loe Strachey[1] thus defines Crown Colonies:—"These are possessions which are for the most part peopled by non-European races of dark colour, and governed not by persons elected by themselves, but by a Governor and other officials sent out from England. The reason for this difference is a very simple one. Those colonies which are peopled by men of English and European races can provide themselves with a better government than we can provide them with from here. Hence they are given responsible governments.

"Those colonies in which the English or European element is very small can best be governed, it is found, by the Crown Colony system. The native, dark-skinned population are not fit to govern themselves—they are too ignorant and too uncivilised, and if the government is left entirely in the hands of the small number of whites who may happen to live in the colony, they are apt not to take enough care of the interests of the

[1] *Industrial and Social Life of the Empire.* Macmillan and Co.

coloured inhabitants. The simplest form of the Crown Colony is that found in some of the smaller groups of islands in the West Indies. Here a Governor is sent out from England, and he—helped by a secretary, a judge, and other officials—governs the island, reporting his actions to the Colonial Office, and consulting the able officials there before he takes important steps. In most cases, however, the Governor has a council, either nominated from among the principal persons in the colony, or else elected by the inhabitants. In some cases —Jamaica or Barbadoes, for example—the council has very great power, and the type of government may be said to approach that of the self-governing colonies."

Now, in West Africa the system is the same as that "found in some of the smaller groups of the West Indian islands," although these West African colonies have each a nominated council of some kind. I should hesitate to say, however, "to assist the Governor." Being nominated by him they can usually manage to agree with him; it is only another hindrance or superfluous affair. Before taking any important steps the West African Governor is supposed to consult the officials at the Colonial Office; but as the Colonial Office is not so well informed as the Governor himself is, this can be no help to him if he be a really able man, and no check on him if he be not an able man. For, be he what he may, he is the representative of the Colonial Office; he cannot, it is true, persuade the Colonial Office to go and involve itself in rows with European continental powers, because the Office knows about them; but if he is a strong-minded man with a fad he can persuade the Colonial Office to let him try that fad on the natives or the traders, because the Colonial Office does not know the natives nor the West African trade.

You see, therefore, you have in the Governor of a West African possession a man in a bad position. He is aided by no council worth having, no regular set of experts; he is held in by another council equally non-expert, except in the direction of continental politics. He may keep out of mischief; he could, if he were

given either time or inducement to study the native languages, laws, and general ethnology of his colony, do much good; but how can he do these things, separated from the native population, as he necessarily is, by his under officials, and with his time taken up, just as every official's time is taken up under the Crown Colony system, with a mass of red-tape clerk work that is unnecessary and intrinsically valueless? I do not pretend to any personal acquaintance with English West African Governors. I only look on their affairs from outside, but I have seen some great men among them. One of them who is dead would, I believe, had the climate spared him, have become a man whom every one interested in West Africa would have respected and admired. He came from a totally different region, the Straits Settlements. He found his West African domain in a lethargic mess, and he hit out right and left, falling, like the rain, on the just and the unjust. I do not wish you to take his utterances or his actions as representing him; but from the spirit of them it is clear he would have become a great blessing to the Coast had he but lived long enough. I am aware he was unpopular from his attempts to enforce the ill-drafted Land Ordinance, but primarily responsible for this ill-judged thing he was not.

In addition to Sir William Maxwell there have been, and are still, other Governors representative of what is best in England; but, circumstanced as they are under this system, continually interrupted as their work is by death or furloughs home, neither England nor West Africa gets one-tenth part of the true value of these men.

In addition to the Governor, there are the other officials, medical, legal, secretarial, constabulary, and customs. The majority of these are engaged in looking after each other and clerking. Clerking is the breath of the Crown Colony system, and customs what it feeds on. Owing to the climate it is practically necessary to have a double staff in all these departments—that is what the system would have if it were perfect; as it is, some

official's work is always being done by a subordinate; it may be equally well done, but it is not equally well paid for, and there is no continuity of policy in any department except those which are entirely clerk and the expense of this is necessarily great. The main evil of this want of continuity is of course in the Governors —a Governor goes out, starts a new line of policy, goes home on furlough leaving in charge the Colonial Secretary, who does not by all means always feel enthusiastic towards that policy; so it languishes. Governor comes back, goes at it again like a giant refreshed, but by no means better acquainted with local affairs for having been away; then he goes home again, or dies, or gets a new appointment; a brand new Governor comes out, he starts a new line of policy, perhaps has a new Colonial Secretary into the bargain; anyhow the thing goes on wavering, not advancing. The only description I have heard of our policy in West African Colonies that seems to me to do it justice is that given by a medical friend of mine, who said it was a coma accompanied by fits.

Of course this would not be the case if the Colonial Office had a definite detailed policy of its own, and merely sent out men to carry it out; but this the Colonial Office has not got and cannot have, because it has not got the scientific and commercial facts of West Africa in its possession. It has therefore to depend on the Governors it sends out; and these, as aforesaid, are men of divers minds. One Governor is truly great on drains; he spends lots of money on them. Another Governor thinks education and a cathedral more important; during his reign drains languish. Yet another Governor comes along and says if there are schools wanted they should be under non-sectarian control, but what is wanted is a railway; and so it goes on, and of course leads to an immense waste of money. And this waste of money is a far more serious thing than it looks; for it is from it that the policy has arisen, of increasing customs dues to a point that seriously hampers trade development, and the far more serious evil of attempting directly as well as indirectly to tax the native population.

I am bound to say I believe any ordinary Englishman would be fairly staggered if he went out to West Africa and saw what there was to show for the expenditure of the last few years in our Crown Colonies there,[1] and knew that all that money had been honestly expended in the main, that none of it had been appropriated by the officials, that they had only had their pay, and that none too great.

But, you will say, after all, if West Africa is as rich as it is said to be, surely it can stand a little wasteful expenditure, and support an even more expensive administration than it now has. All I can say is, that it can stand wasteful expenditure, but only up to a certain point, which is now passed; it would perhaps be more true to say it could stand wasteful expenditure before the factor of the competition of French and German colonies alongside came in; and that a wasteful expenditure that necessitates unjust methods of raising revenue, such as direct taxation on the natives, is a thing West Africa will not stand at all. Of course you can do it; you can impose direct taxation on the native population, but you cannot make it financially pay to do so; for one thing, the collection of that tax will require a considerable multiplication of officials black and white, the black section will by their oppressive methods engender war, and the joint body will consume more than the amount that can be collected. From a fiscal standpoint direct taxation of a non-Mohammedanised or non-Christianised community is rank foolishness, for reasons known to every ethnologist. As for the natural riches of West Africa, I am a profound believer in them, and regard West Africa, taken as a whole, as one of the richest regions in the world; but, as Sir William Maxwell said, "I am convinced that, from causes wholly unpreventable, West Africa is and must remain a place with certain peculiar dangers of its own"[2]; therefore it

[1] For Lagos, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia from 1892 to 1896, £3,364,266.

[2] Forty-eighth annual report Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, 1898.

requires most careful, expert handling. It is no use your trying to get its riches out by a set of hasty amateur experiments; it is no use just dumping down capital on it and calling these goings on "Developing the resources," or "Raising the African in the plane of civilisation;" because these goings on are not these things, they are but sacrifices on the altars of folly and idleness.

Properly managed, those parts of West Africa which our past apathy has left to us are capable of being made into a group of possessions before which the direct value to England, in England, of all the other regions that we hold in the world would sink into insignificance.

Sir William Maxwell, when he referred to "causes wholly unpreventable," was referring mainly to the unhealthiness of West Africa. There seems no escape from this great drawback. Every other difficulty connected with it one can imagine removable by human activity and ingenuity—even the labour difficulty—but, I fear, not so the fever. Although this is not a thing to discourage England from holding West Africa, it is a thing which calls for greater forethought in the administration of it than she need give to a healthy region. In a healthy region it does not matter so much whether there is an excess over requirements in the number of men employed to administer it, but in one with a death rate of at least 35 per cent. of white men it does matter.

I confess it is this excessive expenditure of men which I dislike most in the Crown Colony system, though I know it cannot help it; it is in the make of the thing. If these men were even employed in some great undertaking it would be less grievous; but they are many of them entirely taken up with clerk work, and all of them have to waste a large percentage of their time on it. Some of the men undoubtedly get to like this, but it is a morbid taste. I know one of our possessions where the officials even carry on their personal quarrels with each other on government paper in a high official style, when it would be better if they put aside an hour a week and went and punched each other's heads, and gave the rest of their time to studying

native law and languages and pottering about the country getting up information on it at large, so that the natives would become familiarised with the nature of Englishmen first-hand, instead of being dependent for their knowledge of them on interpreters and the set of subordinate native officials and native police.

I wish that it lay in my power to place before you merely a set of figures that would show you the present state of our West African affairs, but such figures do not exist. Practically speaking, there are no reliable figures for West African affairs. They are not cooked, but you know what figures are—unless they be complete and in their proper stations, they are valueless.

The figures we have are those which appear in "The Colonial Annual Series" of reports. These are not annual; for example, the Gold Coast one was not published for three years; but no matter, when they are published they are misleading enough, unless you know things not mentioned in them but connected with them. However, we will just run through the figures published for one West African Crown Colony. For many reasons I am sorry to have to take those regarding Sierra Leone, but I must, as at present they are the most correct available.

Now the element of error which must be allowed for in these arises from the proximity of the French colony of French Guinea, which is next door to Sierra Leone. That colony has been really developing its exports. Goods have, up to last year, come out through our colony of Sierra Leone, and have been included with the exports of Sierra Leone itself, though Sierra Leone has not dwelt on this interesting fact. And, equally, since 1890 goods going into French Guinea have gone in through Sierra Leone, and though traceable with care, have been put in with the total of the imports. So you see it is a little difficult to find out whether it has been French Guinea or Sierra Leone that has really been doing the trade mentioned in the figures.

Nevertheless, it has been customary to take these joint, mixed up figures and get happy over "the increase

of trade in Sierra Leone during the past ten years"; but a little calm consideration will prevent you from falling into this idle error.

Personally I think that if you are cautious you will try and estimate the trade by the exports; for among the imports there are Government stores, railway material, &c., things that will have some day to be paid for, because it is the rule not to assist a colony under the system until it has been reduced to a West Indian condition; whereas the exports give you the buying power of the colony, and show the limits of the trade which may be expected to be done under existing conditions. Now, the annual total exports during the five years ending—

1875,	amounted	in	value	to, £396,709
1880,	"	"	"	£368,855
1885,	"	"	"	£386,848
1890,	"	"	"	£333,390
1895,	"	"	"	£435,175

These figures show for the twenty-five years an increase of less than 10 per cent., or about ½ per cent. per annum; and this is not so very thrilling when one comes to think that that 10 per cent., and probably more, is showing the increase in the trade not of Sierra Leone, but of French Guinea, and remembers that in 1874 the exports were £481,894, an amount they have not since touched.

Then again even in error you are never quite sure if your Colonial Annual is keeping line; sometimes you will get one by a careful conscientious secretary who takes no end of trouble, and tells you lots of things which you would like to hear about next year, only next year you don't. For example, in Sierra Leone affairs the report for 1887 gave you the imports for consumption in the colony, while that of 1896 represented the total imports, including those afterwards shipped to French Guinea and elsewhere; and again, in estimating the value of the imports Gambia adds the

cost of freight and insurance to the invoice value of imports, and the cost of package to the declared value of exports. So far, only Gambia does this, but at any moment an equally laudable spirit might develop in one of the other colonies, and cause further distraction to the student of their figures.

Besides these clerking errors of omission, there is a constant unavoidable error arising from the so-called smuggling done by the native traders in the hinterland. Remember that colonies which you see neatly enough marked on a map of West Africa with French, English, German, are not really each surrounded by a set of Great Walls of China. For example, under the present arrangement with France, if France keeps to that beautiful Article IX. in the Niger Convention and does not tax English goods more than she at present taxes French goods on the Ivory Coast—cottons of English manufacture will be able to be sold 10 per cent. cheaper in the French territory than in the adjacent English Gold Coast.

Up to the present time it has paid the native hinterland trader to come down into the Gold Coast and buy his cotton goods, for English cottons suit his West African markets better than other makes, that is to say they have a higher buying power; and then he went down into the French Ivory Coast and bought his spirits and guns, which were cheaper there because of lower duty. Having got his selection together he went off and did business with the raw material sellers, and sold the raw material he had purchased back to the two Coasts from which he had bought his selection, sending the greater part of it to the best market for the time being. Now you have changed that, or, rather, you have given France the power to change it by selling English cottons cheaper than they can be sold in your own possessions, and thereby rendered it unnecessary for the hinterland traders to buy on the Gold Coast at all. It will remain necessary for him to buy on the Ivory Coast, for spirits and guns he must have; and if he can get his cottons at the same place as he gets

these, so much the better for him. It is doubtful, however, whether henceforth it will be worth his while to come down and sell his raw material in your possessions at all. He may browse around your interior towns and suck the produce out of them, but it will be to the enrichment of the French colony next door; and, of course, as things are even now, this sort of thing, which goes on throughout all the various colonies of France, England, Germany and Portugal, does not tend to give true value to the official figures concerning trade published by any one of them.

I have no intention, however, of dwelling on the various methods employed by native smugglers with a view to aiding their suppression. It may be a hereditary taint contracted by my ancestors while they sojourned in Devon, it may be private personal villany of my own; but anyhow, I never feel, as from an official standpoint I ought, towards smugglers. I do not ask you to regard the African native trader as a sweet innocent who does not realise the villainy of his doings—he knows all about it; but only once did I feel harshly towards him over smuggling. A native trader had arranged to give me a lift, as it were, in his canoe, and I noticed, with a flattered vanity and a feeling of gratitude, how very careful he had been to make me quite comfortable in the stern, with a perfect little nest of mats and cloths. When we reached our destination and that nest was taken to pieces, I saw that what you might call the backbone of the affair was three kegs of gunpowder, a case of kerosine, and some packages of lucifer matches. That rascal fellow black, as Barbot would call him, had expected we should meet the customs patrol boat, and, basely encroaching on the chivalry of the white man towards the white woman judged that I and my nest would not be overhauled. If there had been a guardian cherub for the Brussels Convention or for Customs doubtless I should have been blown sky high and have afforded material for a moral tale called "The Smuggler's Awful End," but there are no cherubs who watch over Customs or the Brussels Convention in West

Africa, and I have no intention of volunteering for such an appointment.

But to return to the Sierra Leone finances and the relationship which the expenditure of that colony bears to the revenue. The increase in the imports is apparently the thing depended on to justify the idea that as the trade has increased the governmental expenditure has a right to do so likewise. The imports increase in 1896 is given as £90,683. From this you must deduct for railway material, £26,000, and for the increased specie import £19,591, which leaves you an increase of imports of £45,092 from 1887—1896, and remember a good percentage of this remainder of £45,092 belongs to French Guinea.

Now the expenditure on the government of Sierra Leone has increased from £58,534 in 1887 to £116,183, being an increase at the rate of 99·1 per cent., whereas the exports during the same period have increased at the rate of 34·8 per cent., or from £333,157 to £449,033.

In other words, whereas in 1887 the government expenditure amounted to 17·5 per cent., the exports in 1896 amounted to 25·4 per cent. The sum of £40,579 of this increase is credited to police, gaols, transport, and public works;[1] and if this is to be the normal rate of increase, the prospects of the colony are serious; for it contains no rich mineral deposit as far as is at present known, nor are there in it any great native states. As far as we know, Sierra Leone must for an immense period depend on bush products collected by the natives, whose trade wants are only a few luxuries. For it must be remembered that in all these West African Colonies

[1]

		£	Increase £
Expenditure on police and gaols,	1896	31,504	
" " "	1887	3,037	28,467
Expenditure on transport	1896	10,091	
" " "	1887	3,298	6,793
Expenditure on public works.....	1896	6,736	
" " "	1887	1,417	5,319
Aggregate increase.....			40,579

there is not one single thing Europeans can sell to the natives that is of the nature of a true necessity, a thing the natives must have or starve. There is but one thing that even approaches in the West African markets to what wheat is in our own—that thing is tobacco. Next in importance to it, but considerably lower, is the group of trade articles—gunpowder, guns and spirits, next again salt, and below these four staples come Manchester goods and miscellanies; the whole of the rest that lies in the power of civilisation to offer to the West African markets are things that are luxuries, things that will only be purchased by the native when he is in a state of prosperity. This subject I have, however, endeavoured to explain elsewhere.[1]

We have for Sierra Leone, fortunately, a scientific authority to refer to on this matter of the natural resources of the country, and the amount of the natural riches we may presume we can take into account when arranging fiscal matters. This authority is the report of Mr. Scott-Elliott on the district traversed by the Anglo-French Boundary Commission.[2]

Regarding mineral, the report states "that the only mineral of importance is iron, of which the country appears to contain a very large amount. There is a particularly rich belt of titaniferous iron ore in the hills behind Sierra Leone."

Titaniferous iron is an excellent thing in its way, and good for steel making; but it exists nearer home and in cheaper worked regions than Sierra Leone.

The soil is grouped by the report into three classes:

"1. That of the plateaux and hills above 2,000, or sometimes descending to 1,000 feet, which is due to the disintegration of gneiss and granite rocks.

"2. The red laterite which covers almost invariably all the lower hills from the sea level to 1,000 or 2,000 feet.

[1] "The Liquor Traffic in West Africa," *Fortnightly Review*, April, 1898.

[2] *Colonial Reports, Miscellaneous, No.* 3, 1893. G. F. Scott-Elliott, M.A., F.L.S., and C. A. Raisin, B.Sc.

"3. The alluvium, due either to the action of the mangroves along the coast, or to the rivers and streams inland."

These soils are capable of and do produce fine timber, rubber, oil and rice, and the general tropical food stuffs, but these, except the three first, are not very valuable export articles. Whether it is possible to enhance the agricultural value of the alluvium regions by growing tobacco, jute, coffee, cocoa, cotton and sugar, for export, is by some authorities regarded as doubtful on account of the labour problem; but at any rate, if these industries were taken in hand on a large scale, a scale sufficient materially to alter the resources of a West African colony, they would require many years of fostering, and it would be long before they could contribute greatly to the resources of such a colony as Sierra Leone, in the face of the organised production and cheaper labour, wherewith the supply now in the markets of Europe could be competed with.

I have had the advantage of associating with German and Portuguese and French planters of coffee and cocoa. These are the planters who up to the present have been the most successful in West Africa. I do not say because they are better men, but because they have better soils and better labour than there is in our colonies. By these gentlemen I have been industriously educated in soils, &c.; and from what I have learnt about this matter I am bound regretfully to say that most of the soil of the English possessions is not really rich, taken in the main. There are in places patches of rich soil; and the greater part of our soil will be all the better this day 10,000 years hence; but at present the soil is mainly sour clay, slime and skin soils, skin soils over rock, skin soils over sour clay, skin soils over water-logged soil. We have, alas, not got the rich volcanic earth of Cameroon, Fernando Po, and San Thome and Principe. The natives who work the soil understand it fairly well, and negro agriculture is in a well-developed state, and their farms are most carefully tended and well kept. The

rule along the Bight of Benin and Biafra is to change the soil of the farm at least every third year; this they do by cutting down a new bit of bush, burning the bush on the ground at the end of the dry season, and planting the crops. The old farm is then allowed to grow bush or long grass, whichever the particular district goes in for, until the time comes to work back on that piece of land again, when the bush which has grown is in its turn cut down and the ground replanted. This burning of the trees or grass is clearly regarded by the native agriculturist as manuring; it is practically the only method of manuring available for them in a country where cattle in quantities are not kept. It is a wasteful way with timber and rubber growing on the ground of course; but not so widely wasteful as it looks, for your negro agriculturist does not go to make his farm on bits of forest that require very hard clearing work. He clears as easily as he can by means of collecting the great fluffy seed bunches of a certain tree which are inflammable and adding to them all the other inflammable material he can get; he then places these bonfires in the bit of forest he wants to clear and sets fire to them on a favourable night, when the proper sort of breeze is blowing to fan the flames; when the conflagration is over, he fells a few of the trees and leaves the rest standing scorched but not killed. Moreover, of course an African gentleman cannot go and make his farm anywhere he likes: he has to stick to the land which belongs to his family, and work round and round on that. This gives a highly untidy aspect to the family estate, you might think; considering the extent of it, a very small percentage must be kept under cultivation and the rest neglected. But this is not really so; if you were to go and take away from him a bit of the neglected land, you would be taking his farm, say for the year after next and grievously inconvenience him, and he would know it.

The native method of making farms does not, indeed, do so much harm in well-watered, densely-populated

regions like those of Sierra Leone or the Niger Delta; but it does do an immense amount of harm in regions that are densely populated and require to make extensive farms, more particularly in the regions of Lagos and the Gold Coast, where the fertile belt is only a narrow ribbon, edged on the one side by the sand sea of the Sahara, and on the other by the salt sea of the South Atlantic. You can see the result of it in the district round Accra, which has always been heavily populated; for hundreds of years the forest has been kept down by agricultural enterprise. Consequences are, the rainfall is now diminished to a point that threatens to extinguish agriculture, at any rate, a sufficient agriculture to support the local population; and it is not too much to say you can read on the face of the Accra plain famines to come. There is little reason to doubt that both the African deserts, the Sahara and the Kalahari, are advancing towards the Equator. Round Loanda you come across a sand-logged region of some fifty square miles, where you get the gum shed by forests that have gone, humanly speaking, never to return; human agency is largely responsible, it is like sawing the branch of a tree partially through, and then the wind breaks it off. Forest destruction in lands adjacent to deserts is the same thing; the forest is destroyed to a certain extent, an extent that diminishes the rainfall and makes it unable to resist the desert winds, and then—finis.

In the regions of the double rains in the great forest belt of Africa things are different, so you cannot generalise for West Africa at large in this matter. It is one thing for forest destruction to go on in the Gold Coast, quite another for it to go on in Calabar or Congo Français, where men fight back the forest as Dutchmen fight the sea.

But I apologise. This, you will say, is not connected with Governmental expenditure, &c., but it is to me a more amusing subject, and indirectly has a bearing; for example, Government expenditure in the direction of

instituting a Forestry Department would be right enough in some regions, but unnecessary in others.

To return to this agriculture in Sierra Leone. Well, it is, like all West African agriculture, spade husbandry. It is concerned with the cultivation of vegetables for human consumption alone. In the interior of Sierra Leone and throughout the Western Soudan, for which Sierra Leone was once a principal port, there is a fair cattle country, and an old established one, as is shown by the exports of hides mentioned in the writers of the seventeenth century. Yet it would be idle for the most enthusiastic believer in West Africa to pretend that the Western Soudan is coming on to compete with Argentina or Australia in the export of frozen meat; the climate is against it, and therefore this cattle country can only be represented in trade in a hide and horn export. Wool—as the sheep won't wear it, preferring hair instead and that of poor quality—need not I think be looked forward to from West Africa at all.

I have taken the published accounts of Sierra Leone because, as I have said, they are the most complete. They are also, in the main, the most typical. It is true that Sierra Leone has not the gold wealth, nor the developing timber industry of the Gold Coast; but if you ignore French Guinea, and include the things belonging to it with the Sierra Leone totals, you will get a fairly equivalent result. Lagos has not yet shown a mineral export, but it and the Gold Coast has shown of late years an immensely increased export of rubber. Rubber, oil, and timber are the three great riches of our West African possessions, the things that may be relied on, as being now of great value and capable of immense expansion. But these things can only be made serviceable to the markets of the world and a source of riches to England by the co-operation of the natives of the country. In other words, you must solve the labour problem on the one hand, and increase the prosperity of the native population on the other, in order to make West Africa pay you back the value of the life and money already

paid for her. This solution of the labour problem and this co-operation of the natives with you, the Crown Colony system will never gain for you, because it is too expensive for you and unjust to them, not intentionally, not vindictively nor wickedly, but just from ignorance. It destroys the native form of society, and thereby disorganises labour. It has no power of re-organising it. You hear that people are leaving Coomassie and Benin, instead of flocking in to those places, as they were expected to after the destruction of the local tyrannies. English influence in West Africa, represented as it now is by three separate classes of Englishmen, with no common object of interest, or aim in policy, is not a thing capable of re-organising so difficult a region. I have taken the Sierra Leone figures because, as I have said, they are the most complete and typical, and the state of the trade and the expenditure on the Government are those prior to the hut tax war. So they cannot be ascribed to it, nor can the plea be lodged that the expenditure was an enforced one. These figures merely show you the thing that led up to the hut tax war and the heavy enforced expenditure it has and will entail and my reason for detaining you with them is the conviction that a similar policy pursued in our other colonies will lead to the same results—the destruction of trade and the imposition on the colonies of a debt that their natural resources cannot meet unless we are prepared to go in for forced labour and revert to the slave trade policy.

It seems clear enough that our present policy in the Crown Colonies, of a rapidly increasing expenditure in the face of a steadily falling trade, must necessarily lead our Government to seek for new sources of revenue beyond customs dues. New sources under our present system can only be found in direct taxation of the native population; the result of this is now known.

I will not attempt to deal fully with the figures we possess for our remaining Crown Colonies in Western Africa,—Gambia, the Gold Coast, and Lagos,—but merely refer to a few points regarding them that have

so far been published. When the result of the policy pursued in these colonies leads to the inevitable row, and the figures are dealt with by competent men, there is, to my mind, no doubt that a state equal to that of Sierra Leone as a fool's paradise will be discovered; and the deplorable part of the thing is, that the trade palavers of the Chambers and the Colonial Office will give to hasty politicians the idea that West Africa is not worthy of Imperial attention, and large quantities of the blame for this failure of our colonies will be put down quite unjustly to French interference. That French interference has troubled our colonies there, no one will attempt to deny; or that if it had been acting on them when they were in a healthy state it would merely have had a tonic effect, as it has had on the Royal Niger Company's territories; but, acting on the Crown Colonies in their present state, French influence has naturally been poisonous. Even I, not given to sweet mouth as I am, shrink from saying what has been the true effect on the Crown Colonies of England of the policy pursued by us towards French advance. This only will I say, that the French policy is no discredit to France. Regarding the financial condition of Gambia it is not necessary for us to worry ourselves. Gambia is a nuisance to France. She loves to have high dues, and she cannot have them round Gambia way. She has had to encyst it, or it would be to her Senegal and French Guinea possessions a regular main to lay on smuggling. Knowing this she has encysted it; it pays better to smuggle from French Guinea into Gambia or Sierra Leone than from Gambia or Sierra Leone into the French possessions. This is a grave commercial position for us, but to it is largely owing the advance of the prosperity of these French possessions during the past three years.

The Gold Coast has on the west a French possession, the Ivory Coast, on the east the German Togoland. Togo is a narrow strip, and to its east and surrounding it to the north is the French colony of Dahomey, whose recent expansion has told heavily on its next-door

neighbours, both Togo and the English colony to the east Lagos. I give below the latest available figures for the foreign West African possessions.[1]

Unfortunately there are no figures available for the French Soudan which would represent the real value of the trade: the total value of trade is, however, considerable. You must remember that in dealing with French colonies you are dealing with those of a nation not gifted with commercial intelligence; and that, in spite of the perpetual hampering of trade in French colonies, the granting of concessions to French firms, who have not the capital to work them, but are only able to prevent any one else doing so; the high differential tariffs, in some cases 100 per cent., which up to the present time have been levied on English goods, &c.; the English traders nevertheless work in the markets of the French colonies, and work mainly on French goods. Of the £117,518

[1] French colonies—

	Imports.		Exports.	
	1896.	1897.	1896.	1897.
	£	£	£	£
Senegal	1,047,000	1,167,000	783,000	845,000
French Guinea...	185,000	240,000*	231,000	201,000
Ivory Coast	186,000	188,000	176,000	189,000
Dahomey	389,000	330,000	364,000	231,000
French Congo ...	192,000	†	190,000	†

* For nine months only. † No statistics.

Trade of Dahomey and the Ivory Coast for the first three months of 1898—

	Imports.	Exports.	Total trade.
	£	£	£
Ivory Coast	58,658	58,560	117,518
Dahomey	84,064	72,771	156,835

German possessions—

	Imports.			Exports.		
	1895.	1896.	1897.	1895.	1896.	1897.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Togoland...	117,000	94,000	99,000	152,000	83,000	39,000
Cameroons	283,000	268,000	*	204,000	198,000	*
Total...	400,000	362,000	*	356,000	281,000	*

* No figures available for calendar year. *Board of Trade Journal*, September, 1898.

representing the Ivory Coast trade for the first quarter of this year, over £76,000 was English trade, and of the Dahomey £156,835 for the same period, £131,705. In reading the imports figures for these French colonies in Upper Guinea, you must remember that those imports include material for the well directed, unamiable intention of France to cut us off from what she regards as her own Western Soudan; it is a form of investment far more profitable than our expenditure on railways, gaols, prisons, and frontier police. It is one that, presuming this highly unlikely thing—France becoming commercially intelligent—would any year now enable her entirely to pocket the West African trade down to Lagos from Senegal. She may do it at any moment, though it is a very remote possibility. So we will return to the Gold Coast finances, though our authorities on them are at present meagre.

In 1892 the Gold Coast government was financially in a flourishing condition. On the 1st of January, 1891, there was a sum of £75,181 4*s.* 4*d.* standing to the credit of the colony, which was increased to £127,796 2*s.* 3*d.* on the 1st of January, 1892, and to £152,766 16*s.* 7*d.* on the 1st of January, 1893, and the colony had no public debt. There was no native direct taxation. The Customs dues were lower than they are now. The extremely careful official who drew up the report shows evidence of realising that Customs represent an indirect taxation on the native population, for he says: "In Sierra Leone and Lagos the taxation per head is very much higher (than, 2*s.* 5*d.* per head), in the former nine times, and in the latter seven times."[1] However, in all three colonies, apart from the attempts at direct taxation, the indirect taxation on the native has considerably increased by now.

The report for 1894 shows the colony still progressing rapidly, the trade of it amounting in value to £1,663,173 19*s.* 9*d.*, of which £812,830 8*s.* 10*d.* represented the imports and £850,343 10*s.* 11*d.* the exports. The expenditure showed a large increase as compared with previous years. It amounted to £226,931 19*s.* 4*d.*, being

[1] *Colonial Annual*, No. 88, Gold Coast for 1892, published 1893.

£8,670 13*s.* 7*d.* in excess of the revenue for the year, and £47,997 7*s.* 11*d.* more than in 1893. The principal items of increase were public works, upon which the sum of £54,163 0*s.* 3*d.* was spent, and the expedition in defence of the protected district of Attabubu against an Ashantee invasion, which cost £10,778 11*s.* The Gold Coast assets on 31st of December, 1894, stood at £166,944 8*s.* 7*d.*[1] Then came the last Ashantee war, regarding which I beg to refer you to Dr. Freeman's book.[2] No one can deny that he has both experience and intelligence enough to justify him in offering his opinion on the matter. I entirely accept his statements from my knowledge of native affairs elsewhere in West Africa. Anyhow, the last Ashantee war absorbed a good deal of the assets of the Gold Coast. There is no published authority to cite, but I do not think there is an asset now standing to the credit of the Gold Coast Colony, unless it be a loan.

The income for the Gold Coast Colony in 1896 was £237,460 6*s.* 7*d.*, the expenditure £282,277 15*s.* 9*d.* The exports £792,111, against £877,804 in 1895; but the imports were £910,000, against £981,537. Since 1896 the Customs dues have risen; but, *per contra*, the expenditure has also risen, in consequence of the expenses arising from the occupation of Ashantee, and the Gold Coast railway. The occupation of Ashantee and the railway must be looked on in the light of investments —investments that will be profitable or unprofitable, according to their administration, which one must trust will be careful, for they are both things you cannot just dump your money down on and be done with, for the up-keep expenses of both are necessarily large.

The subject of West African railways is one that all who are interested in the future of our possessions there should study most carefully, for two main reasons. Firstly, that there is possibly no other way in which money can be spent so unprofitably and extensively as on railways in such a region. Secondly, because railways are in several districts there—districts with no water carriage

[1] *Colonial Annual*, No. 188, Gold Coast for 1892, published 1893.
[2] *Ashantee and Jaman.* Constable, 1898.

possibilities—simply essential to the expansion of trade. In other words, if you make your railway through the right district, in the right way, it is a thing worth having, a sound investment. If you do not, it is a thing you are better without; not an investment, but an extravagance. The cost of its construction must fall on the colony, alike in money and the distraction, from ordinary trade, of the local labour supply. In both countries the cost of a railway out there is necessarily great. I hastily beg to observe I am not aiming at a rivalry with Martin Tupper in saying this, but am only driven to it by so many people in their haste saying "Oh, for goodness gracious sake! Let the Government make a railway anywhere; it's done little enough for us, and any railway is better than none."

There has been considerable difficulty over the Gold Coast Railway already, though it is only just now entering on the phase of actual existence. Surveys have been made for it in all directions. Surveys are expensive things out there. But the general idea the Government gave the Chambers of Commerce was that, at any rate, this railway was to run up into Ashantee, and be a great general trade artery for the colony. The other day Manchester found out, quite unexpected like, that the Government whose affections Commerce had regarded as safely and properly set on the hinterland trade was off, if you please, flirting round the corner with a group of gold mines at Tarquah, and intended, nay, was even then proceeding with the undertaking of running the one and only Gold Coast Coast railway just up to Tarquah, and no further, until this section paid. Manchester, very properly shocked at this fickleness in the Government and its heartless abandonment of the hinterland trade, said things, interesting and excited things, in its *Guardian*; but, beyond illustrating the truth of the old adage that it's "well to be off with the old love before you are on with the new," things of no avail.

This Tarquah railway is estimated to cost £5,000 per mile. It is to be financed by a loan, raised by the Crown Colony Agents, of £250,000. We have ample reason to

believe that this £5,000 per mile will not represent one-third of its final cost from demonstrations by the Uganda, Congo Belge, and Senegal railways; more particularly are we so assured from the knowledge that the railway's construction will be in the hands of nominees of the Crown Agents, whose method of arranging for the construction of these railways is curious. They do not invite tenders for material or freight in the open market, and they do not give the taxed people in the country itself any opportunity for contracting for the supply of as much local material as possible—things it would be alike fair and business-like to do. Exceedingly curious, moreover, is the fact that the nominees of the Crown agents' employers are not subject to the control of the local governmental authorities on the Coast, their sole connection with the affair apparently being confined to the passing of ordinances, as per instruction from the Colonial Office, authorising loans for the payment of the debt incurred by making the railway.

There is no doubt that any Gold Coast railway which is ever to pay even for its coal must run through a rich bit of the local gold reefs. Similarly, there is no doubt that the gold mines of the Gold Coast have been terribly kept back by lack of transport facilities for the machinery necessary to work them; but there is, nevertheless, evidently much that is unsound in the present railway scheme. If the charge for it, as some suggest, were to be thrown on the gold mines, it would be as heavy a charge as the old bad transport was, and they would be no less hampered. If, as is most likely, the charge for the railway be thrown on the general finance of the colony, it will be a drain on other forms of trade, without in any way improving them; in fact, during its construction, it will absorb labour from the general trade—oil, rubber, and timber—and, if it extensively increases the gold-mining industry, it will keep the labour tied to it chronically, to the disadvantage of other trades.

Lagos, our next Crown Colony, is a very rich possession, and under Sir Alfred Moloney, who discovered the use of the Kicksia Africana as a rubber

tree, and Sir Gilbert Carter, who fostered the industry and opened the trade roads, sprang in a few years into a phenomenal prosperity. Then came the French aggression on its hinterland, the seizing of Nikki, which was one of those *foci* of trade routes, though possibly, as many have said, a non-fertile bit of country in itself. To give you some idea of the bound up in prosperity made by Lagos, the exports in 1892 were £577,083; in 1895, £985,595. The main advance has been in rubber, which in 1896 was exported from Lagos to the value of £347,721. Early in this year, however, the state of the Lagos trade was considered so unsatisfactory that a local commission to inquire into the causes of this state of affairs was appointed.

The publication of the Government Trade Returns for 1897 supported the long grumble that had been going on about the bad state of trade in Lagos, the imports for 1897 showing a decrease on those of 1895 by £67,474. The *Board of Trade Journal*, quoting from the *Lagos Weekly Record* of February 28th, 1898, says, "An examination of the export returns affords a clue to the direction of such decrease. It is to be noted that notwithstanding that the export of rubber in 1897 shows an excess of £13,367 above that exported in 1895, yet in the aggregate of the total exports of the two years that of 1897 shows a decrease of £193,745; this is due to the great falling off which is perceptible in the palm oil and kernel trade, which together show a decrease in 1897 of £162,580 as compared with the quantities exported in 1895; while as compared with the exports in 1896 the decrease amounts to £114,773. The returns show a steady and increasing decline in the exports of these products, for while the decrease in 1896 as compared with 1895 was only £47,807, the decrease had risen in 1897 as compared with the previous year to £114,773, as already intimated, which implies that there has been a further falling off of the trade to the extent of nearly £67,000. This manifest excessive diminution in what must be regarded as the staple commodities of the trade is undoubtedly a serious indication, for though

these commodities come under the classification of jungle products they are not liable to exhaustion as are the rubber or timber industries, and hence they form the only reliable commodities upon which the trade must expand. The dislocation of the labour system in the hinterland is no doubt responsible in a large measure for the falling off in the yield of these products, while in many instances they have been abandoned for the more remunerative rubber business. But, be the circumstances what they may, it is evident that there has been an actual decrease of trade to the extent of over £114,000."

This was the state of affairs the local committee was appointed to deal with. Its discussions were long and careful. I will not attempt to drag you through its final report, which a grossly ungrateful public in Lagos sniffed at because it merely seemed carefully to reproduce every one's opinion on the causes of the falling off of trade and to agree with it solemnly; but, like the rest of the local world, it made no sweeping suggestion of means whereby things could be altered. Since the committee, however, was formed, there has been a greater interest taken in expenditure, healthy in its way, but too often ignoring the fact, that it is not so much the amount of money that is spent governmentally that constitutes waste, but the things on which it is expended. Large sums have been spent in Lagos, I am informed, on building a Government House that every valuable Governor ought to be paid to keep out of, so unhealthy is its situation, and again on bridging a lagoon that has no particular sound bottom to it worth mentioning.

That such forms of expenditure are not the necessary grooves into which a place like Lagos is driven in order to get rid of its money is undoubted. The local press at any rate indicates other grooves; for example here is a cheerful little paragraph:

"*A propos* of what was said in your last issue about the grave-diggers, there is no doubt that something should be done to relieve the men from the strain of

work to which they are continuously subjected. The demands of a constantly increasing death rate, which has caused the cemeteries to be enlarged, make it necessary that the number of grave-diggers should be increased. Besides, these men are poorly paid for the work they do. Of the twenty grave-diggers, six are paid at the rate of 1*s.* per diem, and the rest at the rate of 10*d.* They have no holidays, either, like other people. While the Government labourers, of whom there is a host, may skulk half their time, the hard-working grave-digger is at it from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day, Sundays included, for the Grim Reaper is ever busy. The keeper of the graveyards, also, has much to do for the paltry salary he receives. I would earnestly appeal to the authorities to do something to raise the burden of this overworked staff."[1] So would I, but rather in the direction of giving the "Grim Reaper" and the grave-diggers fewer people to bury. I must also give you another beautiful little bit of local colour, although it suggests further expenditure. "It is satisfactory to note that the Chamber of Commerce intends to take up the question of the swamp near the petroleum magazine. Since the Government made the causeway leading to the dead-house and cut off the tidal inflow, the upper portion of the swamp has been formed into a most noxious disease-breeding sink, into which refuse of all kinds is thrown, the stagnant waters and refuse combining, under the effects of the sun, to emit a most formidable pestilential effluvia. In the interests of humanity something should be done to abate this nuisance."[2]

However, I leave these local questions of Lagos town. They just present a pretty picture of the difficulties that surround dealing with a place that has by nature swamps, that must have dead houses, grave-diggers, and extensive cemetery accommodation, and that is peopled by natives who will instinctively throw refuse

[1] *Lagos Standard*, September 7, 1898.
[2] *Lagos Weekly Record*, September 10, 1898.

into any hole; with evidently a large death rate in the native population and a published death rate in whites of 153 per thousand. Let us now return to the higher finance.

"The total expenditure of Lagos in 1888 amounted to £62,735 15*s.* 11*d.* The expenditure has risen in 1898 to £192,760, which gives an excess of £130,025. The total cost of the staff in 1888 was £15,932, while the present cost amounts to £41,604, which is an increase of £25,672. This increase, apart from the augmentation in the Governor's salary, is mainly in respect to the following departments:—Secretariat, Harbour Department, Constabulary and Police, and the Public Works Department. The cost of working the secretariat has been increased by £1,074, due to the following additional officers:—Two assistant colonial secretaries, a chief clerk, and a first clerk. It is well known that in 1888, when the department cost the colony about one-half its present expenses as regards the European staff, the work was performed with efficiency and despatch; while at present it is not only difficult to get business got through, but, what is more, if the business is not followed up with watchful care, it will become lost in the superabundance of assistants and clerks who crowd the department, and the practical expression of whose work is more discernible on the public revenue than anything else."[1] The *Lagos Record* goes on to say, "There is room for retrenchment in the matter of expenditure on account of the European official staff." I do not follow it here. It is room for retrenchment in mere routine workers, black and white, that is wanted, and the liberation of the Europeans to do work worth their risking their lives in West Africa for. The percentage of black officials, mainly clerks—excellent and faithful to their duties—is increasing in all our colonies there too rapidly; and the existence of poorly paid but numerous posts under Government with a certain amount of prestige, is a dangerous allurement to native young men

[1] *Lagos Weekly Record*, August 27, 1898.

tempting them from nobler careers, and forming them into a sort of wall-class between the English official and the main body of the native population. Take, for example, the number of Government servants at the Gold Coast, according to Sir William Maxwell, 1897 :—

	European officers.	Native clerks.	Hausas.	Civil police.
Accra	35	206	432	105
Cape Coast	8	69	0	47
Elmina ...	5	36	50	19

An awful percentage of clerks is 311 for such a country, more clerks than police, only 121 less Government native clerks than soldiers in the army ; and you may depend upon it the white officials are clerking away, more or less, too. I always think how very apposite the answer of an official was to the criticism of excessive expenditure : "Sir, there is no reckless expenditure ; every J pen has to be accounted for!"

No, I am quite unable to agree that anything but the Crown Colony system is to blame, and that because it is engaged in administering a district with no possibilities in it for England save commercial matters, in which the Crown Colony system is not well informed. I have only quoted these figures to show you that Lagos and the Gold Coast are merely keeping line with Sierra Leone—increasing their expenditure in the face of a falling trade, with a dark trade future before them, on account of French activity in cutting them off from their inland markets, and of their own mismanagement of the native races.

The trade and the prosperity of West Africa depend on jungle products. There is no more solid reason to fear the extinction of West Africa's jungle products of oil, timber, fibre, rubber, than there is to worry about the extinction of our own coal-fields—probably not so much—for they rapidly renew themselves. Yes, even rubber, though that is slower at it than palm oil and

kernel; and at present not one-tenth part of the jungle products are in touch with commerce; and save gold, and that to a very small extent, the mineral wealth of West Africa is untouched. It is not in all regions only titaniferous iron; there are silver, lead, copper, antimony, quicksilver, and tin ores there unexploited, and which it would not be advisable to attempt to exploit until the so-called labour problem is solved. This problem is really that of the co-operation for mutual benefit of the African and the Englishman. In the solution of this problem alone lies the success of England in West Africa, not of England herself, for England could survive the loss of West Africa whole, though doing so would cost her dear alike in honour and in profit. The Crown Colony system which now represents England in West Africa will never give this solution. It necessarily destroys native society, that is to say, it disorganises it, and has not in it the power to reorganise. As I have already endeavoured to show, English influence in West Africa, as represented by the Crown Colony system, consists of three separate classes of Englishmen with no common object of interest, and is not a thing capable of organising so difficult a region. All these three classes, be it granted, represents things needed for the organisation of a State. No State can exist without having the governmental, the religious, and the mercantile factors, working together in it; but in West Africa these representatives of the English State are things apart and opposed to each other, and do not constitute a State. You can no more expect to get the function of a State, good government, out of these three disconnected classes of Englishmen in Africa, than to know the hour of day from the parts of a watch before they were put together.

You will see I have humbly attempted to place this affair before you from no sensational point of view, but from the commercial one—the value of West Africa to England's commerce—and have attempted to show you

how this is suffering from the adherence of England to a form of government that is essentially un-English. I have made no attack on the form of government for such regions formulated in England's more intellectual though earlier period of Elizabeth, the Chartered Company system as represented by the Royal Niger Company. I have neither shares in, nor reason to attack the Royal Niger Company, which has in a few years, and during the period of the hottest French enterprise, acquired a territory in West Africa immensely greater than the territory acquired during centuries under the Crown Colony system; it has also fought its necessary wars with energy and despatch, and no call upon Imperial resources; it has not only paid its way, but paid its shareholders their 6 per cent., and its bitterest enemies say darkly, far more. I know from my knowledge of West Africa that this can only have been effected by its wise native policy. I know that this policy owes its wisdom and its success to one man, Sir George Taubman-Goldie, a man who, had he been under the Crown Colony system, could have done no more than other men have done who have been Governors under it; but, not being under it, the territories he won for England have not been subjected to the jerky amateur policy of those which are under the Crown Colony system. For nearly twenty years the natives under the Royal Niger Company have had the firm, wise, sympathetic friendship of a great Englishman, who understood them, and knew them personally. It is the continuous influence of one great Englishman unhampered by non-expert control, that has caused England's exceedingly strange success in the Niger; coupled with the identity of trade and governmental interest, and the encouragement of religion given by the constitution and administration of the Niger Company. This is a thing not given by all Chartered Companies; indeed, I think I am right in saying that the Niger and the North Borneo Companies stand alone in controlling territories that have been essentially trading during recent years. This association of trade and government is, to my mind, an *absolutely necessary*

restraint on the Charter Company form of government ;[1] but there is another element you must have to justify Charters, and that is that they are in the hands of an Englishman of the old type.

I am perfectly aware that the natives of Lagos and other Crown Colonies in West Africa are, and have long been, anxious for the Chartered Company of the Niger to be taken over by the Government, as they pathetically and frankly say, "so that now the trade in their own district is so bad, it may get a stimulus by a freer trade in the Niger," and the native traders not connected with the Company may rush in ; while officials in the Crown Colonies have been equally anxious, as they say with frankness no less pathetic, so that they may have chances of higher appointments. I am equally aware that the merchants of England not connected with the Niger Company, which is really an association of African merchants, desire its downfall ; yet they all perfectly well know, though they do not choose to advertise the fact, that three months Crown Colony form of government in the Niger territories will bring war, far greater and more destructive than any war we have yet had in West Africa, and will end in the formation of a debt far greater than any debt we now have in West Africa, because of the greater extent of territory and the greater power of the native States, now living peacefully enough under England, but not under England as misrepresented by the Crown Colony system. I am not saying that Chartered Companies are good ; I am only saying they are better than the Crown Colony plan ; and that if the Crown Colony system is substituted for the Chartered Company, which is directly a trading Company, England will have to pay a very heavy bill. There would be, of course, a temporary spurt in trade, but it would be a flash in the pan, and in the end, an end that would come in a few years' time, the British taxpayer would be cursing West Africa at large, and the Niger

[1] See introduction to *Folk Lore of the Fjort.* R. E. Dennett. David Nutt, 1898.

territories in particular. Personally, I entirely fail to see why England should be tied to either of these plans, the Crown Colony or the Chartered Company, for governing tropical regions. Have we quite run out of constructive ability in Statecraft? Is it not possible to formulate some new plan to mark the age of Victoria?

CHAPTER XVI

THE CLASH OF CULTURES

Wherein this student, realising as usual, when too late, that the environment of such opinions as are expressed above is boiling hot water, calls to memory the excellent saying, "As well be hung for a sheep as a lamb," and goes on.

I HAVE no intention, however, of starting a sort of open-air steam laundry for West African washing. I have only gone into the unsatisfactory-to-all-parties-concerned state of affairs there not with the hope, but with the desire, that things may be improved and further disgrace avoided. It would be no good my merely stating that, if England wishes to make her possessions there morally and commercially pay her for the loss of life that holding them entails, she must abolish her present policy of amateur experiments backed by good intentions, for you would naturally not pay the least attention to a bald statement made by merely me. So I have had to place before you the opinions of others who are more worthy of your attention. I must however for myself disclaim any right to be regarded as the mouthpiece of any party concerned, though Major Lugard has done me the honour to place me amongst the Liverpool merchants. I can claim no right to speak as one of them. I should be only too glad if I had this honour, but I have not. There was early this year a distressing split between Liverpool and myself—whom I am aware they call

behind my back "Our Aunt"—and I know they regard me as a vexing, if even a valued, form of relative.

This split, I may say (remembering Mr. Mark Twain's axiom, that people always like to know what a row is about), arose from my frank admiration of both the Royal Niger Company and France, neither of which Liverpool at that time regarded as worthy of even the admiration of the most insignificant; so its *Journal of Commerce* went for me. The natural sweetness of my disposition is most clearly visible to the naked eye when I am quietly having my own way, so naturally I went for its *Journal of Commerce*. Providentially no one outside saw this deplorable family row, and Mr. John Holt put a stop to it by saying to me, "Say what you like, you cannot please all of us;" had it not been for this I should not have written another line on the maladministration of West Africa beyond saying, "Call that Crown Colony system you are working there a Government! England, at your age, you ought to be ashamed of yourself!" But you see, as things are, I am not speaking for any one, only off on a little lone fight of my own against a state of affairs which I regard as a disgrace to my country.

Well but, you may say, after all what you have said points to nothing disgraceful. You have expressly said that there is no corruption in the government there, and the rest of the things—the change of policy arising from the necessity for white men to come home at the least every twelve months, the waste of money necessary to local exigencies, and the fact that officers and gentlemen cannot be expected to understand and look after what one might call domestic expenses—may be things unavoidable and peculiar to the climate. To this I can only say, Given the climate, why do you persist in ignoring the solid mass of expert knowledge of the region which is in the hands of the mercantile party, and go on working your Governors from a non-expert base? You have in England an unused but great mass of knowledge among men of all classes who have personally dealt with West Africa—yet you do not work from that,

organise it, and place it at the service of the brand new Governors who go out; far from it. I know hardly any more pathetic sight than the new official suddenly appointed to West Africa buzzing round trying to find out "what the place is really like, you know." I know personally one of the greatest of our Governors who have been down there, a man with iron determination and courage, who was not content with the information derivable from a list of requisites for a tropical climate, the shorter Hausa grammar and a nice cherry-covered little work on diseases—the usual fillets with which England binds the brows of her Sacrifices to the Coast—but went and read about West Africa, all by himself, alone in the British Museum. He was a success, but still he always declares that the only book he found about this particular part was a work by a Belgian, with a frontispiece depicting the author, on an awful river, in the act as per inscription, of shouting, "Row on, brave men of Kru!" which, as subsequent knowledge showed him that bravery was not one of the main qualities of the Kru men, shook him up about all his British Museum education. So in the end he, like the rest, had to learn for himself, out there. Of course, if the Governors were carefully pegged down to a West African place and lived long enough, and were not by nature faddists, doubtless they would learn, and in the course of a few years things would go well; but they are not pegged down. No sooner does one of them begin to know about the country he is in charge of than off he is whisked and deposited again, in a brand new region for which West Africa has not been a fitting introduction.

Then, as for the domestic finance, why expect officers and lawyers, doctors and gentlemen from clubland to manage fiscal matters? Of course they naturally don't know about trade affairs, or whether the Public Works Department is spending money, or merely wasting it. You require professional men in West Africa, but not to do half the work they are now engaged on in connection with red tape and things they do not understand. Of course, errors of this kind may be merely Folly, you may

have plenty more men as good as these to replace them with, so it may matter more to their relations than to England if they are wasted alike in life and death, and you are so rich that the gradual extinction of your tropical trade will not matter to your generation. But as a necessary consequent to this amateurism, or young gentlemen's academy system, the Crown Colony system, there is disgrace in the injustice to and disintegration of the native races it deals with.

Now when I say England is behaving badly to the African, I beg you not to think that the philanthropic party has increased. I come of a generation of Danes who when the sun went down on the Wulpensand were the men to make light enough to fight by with their Morning Stars; and who, later on, were soldiers in the Low Countries and slave owners in the West Indies, and I am proud of my ancestors; for whatever else they were, they were not humbugs; and the generation that is round me now seems to me in its utterances at any rate tainted with humbug. I own that I hate the humbug in England's policy towards weaker races for the sake of all the misery on white and black it brings; and I think as I see you wasting lives and money, sowing debt and difficulties all over West Africa by a hut tax war in Sierra Leone, fighting for the sake of getting a few shillings you have no right to whatsoever out of the African—who are you that you should point your finger in scorn at my tribe? I, as one of that tribe, blush for you, from the basis that you are a humbug and not scientific, which I presume you will agree is not the same thing as my being a philanthropist.

I had the honour of meeting in West Africa an English officer who had previously been doing some fighting in South Africa. He said he "didn't like being a butterman's nigger butcher." "Oh! you're all right here then," I said; "you're out now for Exeter Hall, the plane of civilisation, the plough, and the piano." I will not report his remarks further; likely enough it was the mosquitoes that made him say things, and of

course I knew with him, as I know with you, butchery of any sort is not to your liking, though war when it's wanted is; the distinction I draw between them is a hard and fast one. There is just the same difference to my mind between an unnecessary war on an unarmed race and a necessary war on the same race, as there is between killing game that you want to support yourself with or game that is destructive to your interests, and on the other hand the killing of game just to say that you have done it. This will seem a deplorably low view to take, but it is one supported by our history. We have killed down native races in Australasia and America, and it is no use slurring over the fact that we have profited by so doing. This argument, however, cannot be used in favour of killing down the African in tropical Africa, more particularly in Western Tropical Africa. If you were to-morrow to kill every native there, what use would the country be to you? No one else but the native can work its resources; you cannot live in it and colonise it. It would therefore be only an extremely interesting place for the zoologist, geologist, mineralogist, &c., but a place of no good to any one else in England.

This view, however, of the profit derivable from and justifying war you will refuse to discuss; stating that such profit in your wars you do not seek; that they have been made for the benefit of the African himself, to free him from his native oppressors in the way of tyrannical chiefs and bloody superstitions, and to elevate him in the plane of civilisation. That this has been the intention of our West African wars up to the Sierra Leone war, which was forced on you for fiscal reasons, I have no doubt: but that any of them advanced you in your mission to elevate the African, I should hesitate to say. I beg to refer you to Dr. Freeman's opinions on the Ashantee wars on this point,[1] but for myself I should say that the blame of the failure of these wars to effect their desired end has been due to the want of power to re-organise

[1] *Ashantee and Jaman*, Freeman (Constable and Co., 1898).

native society after a war; for example, had the 1873 Ashantee war been followed by the taking over of Ashantee and the strong handling of it, there would not have been an 1895 Ashantee war; or, to take it the other way, if you had followed up the battle of Katamansu in 1827, you need not have had an 1874 war even. Dr. Freeman holds, that if you had let the Ashantis have a seaport and generally behaved fairly reasonably, you need hardly have had Ashantee wars at all. But, however this may be, I think that a good many of the West African wars of the past ten years have been the result of the humbug of the previous sixty, during which we have proclaimed that we are only in Africa for peaceful reasons of commerce, and religion, and education, not with any desire for the African's land or property: that, of course, it is not possible for us to extend our friendship or our toleration to people who go in for cannibalism, slave-raiding, or human sacrifices, but apart from these matters we have no desire to meddle with African domestic affairs, or take away their land. This, I own, I believe to have honestly been our intention, and to be our intention still, but with our stiff Crown Colony system of representing ourselves to the African, this intention has been and will be impossible to carry out, because between the true spirit of England and the spirit of Africa it interposes a distorting medium. It is, remember, not composed of Englishmen alone, it includes educated natives, and yet it knows the true native only through interpreters.

But why call this humbug? you say. Well, the present policy in Africa makes it look so. Frankly, I do not see how you could work your original policy out unless it were in the hands of extremely expert men, patient and powerful at that. Too many times in old days have you allowed white men to be bullied, to give the African the idea that you, as a nation, meant to have your way. Too many times have you allowed them to violate parts of their treaties under your nose, until they got out of the way of thinking you would hold them to their treaties at all, and then suddenly

down you came on them, not only holding them to their side of the treaties, but not holding to your own, imposing on them restrictions and domestic interference which those treaties made no mention of at all. I have before me now copies of treaties with chiefs in the hinterland of our Crown Colonies, wherein there is not even the anti-slavery clause—treaties merely of friendship and trade, with the undertaking on the native chief's part to hand over no part or right in his territories to a foreign power without English Government consent. Yet, in the districts we hold from the natives under such treaties, we are contemplating direct taxation, which to the African means the confiscation of the property taxed. We have, in fact, by our previous policy placed ourselves to the African with whom we have made treaties, in the position of a friend. "Big friend," it is true, but not conqueror or owner. Our departure now from the "big friend" attitude into the position of owner, hurts his feelings very much; and coupled with the feeling that he cannot get at England, who used to talk so nicely to him, and whom he did his best to please, as far as local circumstances and his limited power would allow, by giving up customs she had an incomprehensible aversion to, it causes the African chief to say "God is up," by which I expect he means the Devil, and give way to war, or sickness, or distraction, or a wild, hopeless, helpless, combination of all three; and then, poor fellow, when he is only naturally suffering from the dazzles your West African policy would give to an iron post, you go about sagely referring to "a general antipathy to civilisation among the natives of West Africa," "anti-white-man's leagues," "horrible secret societies," and such like figments of your imagination; and likely enough throw in as a dash for top the statement that the chief is "a drunken slave-raider," which as the captain of the late s.s. *Sparrow* would say, "It may be so, and, again, it mayn't." Anyhow it seems to occur to you as an argument only after the war is begun, though you have known the man some years; and it has not been the ostensible reason

for any West African war save those in the Niger Company's territories, which run far enough inland to touch the slave-raiding zone, and which are entirely excluded from my arguments because they have been in the hands of experts on West Africa in war-making and in war-healing.

Our past wars in West Africa, I mean all our wars prior to the hut-tax war, have been wars in order to suppress human sacrifice, to protect one tribe from the aggression of another, and to prevent the stopping of trade by middlemen tribes. These things are things worth fighting for. The necessity we have been under to fight them has largely arisen from our ancestors shirking a little firm-handedness in their generation.

There is very little doubt that, owing to a want of reconstruction after destruction, these wars have not been worth to the Empire the loss of life and money they have cost; but this is nothing against us as fighters nor any real disgrace to our honour, but merely a slur on our intellectual powers in the direction of statecraft. They are wars of a totally different character to those of the hut-tax kind, which arise from aggressions on native property; the only thing in common between them is the strain of poor statecraft. This imperfection, however, exists to a far greater extent in hut-tax war, for to it we owe that general feeling of dislike to the advance of civilisation you now hear referred to. That, to a certain extent, this dislike already exists as the necessary outcome of our policy of late years, and that it will increase yearly, I fear there is very little doubt. It is the toxin produced by the microbe. It is the consequence of our attempt to introduce direct taxation, which seems to me to be an affair identical with your greased cartridges for India. Doubtless, such people ought not to object to greased cartridges; but, doubtless, such people as we are ought not to give them, and commit, over again, a worthless blunder, with no bad intention be it granted, but with no common sense.

It has been said that the Sierra Leone hut-tax war is "a little Indian mutiny"; those who have said it do not

seem to have known how true the statement is, for these attacks on property in the form of direct taxation are, to the African, treachery on the part of England, who, from the first, has kept on assuring the African that she does not mean to take his country from him, and then, as soon as she is strong enough, in his eyes, starts deliberately doing it. When you once get between two races the feeling of treachery, the face of their relationship is altered for ever, altered in a way that no wholesome war, no brutality of individuals, can alter. Black and white men for ever after a national breach of faith tax each other with treachery and never really trust each other again.

The African, however, must not be confounded with the Indian. Externally, in his habits he is in a lower culture state; he has no fanatical religion that really resents the incursions of other religions on his mind; Fetish can live in and among all sorts and kinds of religions without quarrelling with them in the least, grievously as they quarrel with Fetish; he has no written literature to keep before his eyes a glorious and mythical past, which, getting mixed up with his religious ideas, is liable in the Indian to make him take at times lobster-like backward springs in the direction of that past, though it was never there, and he would not have relished it if it had been. Nevertheless, the true negro is, I believe, by far the better man than the Asiatic; he is physically superior, and he is more like an Englishman than the Asiatic; he is a logical, practical man, with feelings that are a credit to him, and are particularly strong in the direction of property; he has a way of thinking he has rights, whether he likes to use them or no, and will fight for them when he is driven to it. Fight you for a religious idea the African will not. He is not the stuff you make martyrs out of, nor does he desire to shake off the shackles of the flesh and swoon into Nirvana; and although he will sit under a tree to any extent, provided he gets enough to eat and a little tobacco, he won't sit under trees on iron spikes, or hold a leg up all the time, or fakirise in any fashion for the benefit of his soul or yours. His make of mind is

exceedingly like the make of mind of thousands of Englishmen of the stand-no-nonsense, Englishman's-house-is-his-castle type. Yet, withal, a law-abiding man, loving a live lord, holding loudly that women should be kept in their place, yet often grievously henpecked by his wives, and little better than a slave to his mother, whom he loves with a love he gives to none other. This love of his mother is so dominant a factor in his life that it must be taken into consideration in attempting to understand the true negro. Concerning it I can do no better than give you the Reverend Leighton Wilson's words; for this great missionary knew, as probably none since have known, the true negro, having laboured for many years amongst the most unaltered negro tribes—the Grain Coast tribes—and his words are as true to-day of the unaltered negro as on the day he wrote them thirty-eight years ago, and Leighton Wilson, mind you, was no blind admirer of the African.

"Whatever other estimate we may form of the African, we may not doubt his love for his mother. Her name, whether dead or alive, is always on his lips and in his heart. She is the first being he thinks of when awakening from his slumbers and the last he remembers when closing his eyes in sleep; to her he confides secrets which he would reveal to no other human being on the face of the earth. He cares for no one else in time of sickness, she alone must prepare his food, administer his medicine, perform his ablutions, and spread his mat for him. He flies to her in the hour of his distress, for he well knows if all the rest of the world turn against him she will be steadfast in her love, whether he be right or wrong.

"If there be any cause which justifies a man in using violence towards one of his fellow men it would be to resent an insult offered to his mother. More fights are occasioned among boys by hearing something said in disparagement of their mothers than all other causes put together. It is a common saying among them, if a man's mother and his wife are both on the point of being drowned, and he can save only one of them, he must save his mother, for the avowed reason if the wife

is lost he may marry another, but he will never find a second mother."[1]

Among the tribes of whom Wilson is speaking above, it is the man's true mother. Among the Niger Delta tribes it is often the adopted mother, the woman who has taken him when, as a child, he has been left motherless, or, if he is a boughten child, the woman who has taken care of him. Among both, and throughout all the bush-men tribes in West Africa, however, this deep affection is the same; next to the mother comes the sister to the African, and this matter has a bearing politically.

There is little doubt that there exists a distrustful feeling towards white culture. Up to our attempt to enforce direct taxation it was only a distrustful feeling which a few years' careful, honest handling would have disposed of. Since our attempt there is no doubt there is something approaching a panicky terror of white civilisation in all the native aristocracies and property owners. It is not, I repeat, to be attributed to Fetish priests. Certainly, on the whole, it is not attributable to a dislike of European customs or costumes; it is the reasonable dislike to being dispossessed alike of power and property in what they regard as their own country. A considerable factor in this matter is undoubtedly the influence of the women—the mothers of Africa. Just as your African man is the normal man, so is your African woman the normal woman. I openly own that if I have a soft spot in my feelings it is towards African women; and the close contact I have lived in with them has given rise to this, and, I venture to think, made me understand them. I know they have their faults. For one thing they are not so religiously minded as the men. I have met many African men who were philosophers, thinking in the terms of Fetish, but never a woman so doing. Be it granted that on the whole they know more about the details of Fetish procedure than the men do. Yet though frightened of them all, a blind faith in any mortal Ju Ju they do not possess. Your African lady is artful with them, not philosophic, possibly because

[1] *Western Africa*, Wilson, 1856, p. 116.

she has other things to do—what with attending to the children, the farm, and the market—than go mooning about as those men can. For another thing they go in for husband poisoning in a way I am unable to approve of.

Well, it may be interesting to inquire into the reasons that make the West African woman a factor against white civilisation. These reasons are—firstly, that she does not know practically anything about it; and, secondly, she has the normal feminine dislike to innovations. Missionary and other forms of white education have not been given to the African women to anything like the same extent that they have been given to the men. I do not say that there are not any African women who are not thoroughly educated in white education, for there are, and they can compare very favourably from the standpoint of their education with our normal women; but these have, I think I may safely say, been the daughters of educated African men, or have been the women who have been immediately attached to some mission station. I have no hesitation in saying that, considering the very little attention that has been given to the white education of the African women, they give evidence of an ability in due keeping with that of the African men. But all I mean to say is, that our white culture has not had a grasp over the womankind of Africa that can compare with that it has had over the men; for one woman who has been brought home to England and educated in our schools, and who has been surrounded by English culture, &c., there are 500 men. But into the possibilities of the African woman in the white education department I do not mean to go; I am getting into a snaggy channel by speaking on woman at all. It is to the mass of African women, untouched by white culture, but with an enormous influence over their sons and brothers that I am now referring as a factor in the dislike to the advance of white civilisation; and I have said they do not like it because, for one thing, they do not know it; that is to say, they do not know it from the inside and at its best, but only from

the outside. Viewed from the outside in West Africa white civilisation, to a shrewd mind like hers, is an evil thing for her boys and girls. She sees it taking away from them the restraints of their native culture, and in all too many cases leading them into a life of dissipation, disgrace, and decay; or, if it does not do this, yet separating the men from their people.

The whole of this affair requires a whole mass of elaborate explanations to place it fairly before you, but I will merely sketch the leading points now. (1) The law of mütterrecht makes the tie between the mother and the children far closer than that between the father and them: white culture reverses this, she does not like that. (2) Between husband and wife there is no community in goods under native law; each keeps his and her separate estate. White culture says the husband shall endow his wife with all his worldly goods; this she knows usually means, that if he has any he does not endow her with them, but whether he has or has not he endows himself with hers as far as any law permits. Similarly he does not like it either. These two white culture things, saddling him with the support of the children and endowing his wife with all his property, presents a repulsive situation to the logical African. Moreover, white culture expects him to think more of his wife and children than he does of his mother and sisters, which to the uncultured African is absurd.

Then again both he and his mother see the fearful effects of white culture on the young women, who cannot be prevented in districts under white control from going down to the coast towns and to the Devil: neither he nor the respectable old ladies of his tribe approve of this. Then again they know that the young men of their people who have thoroughly allied themselves to white culture look down on their relations in the African culture state. They call the ancestors of their tribe "polygamists," as if it were a swear-word, though they are a thousand times worse than polygamists themselves: and they are ashamed of their mothers. It is a whole seething mass of stuff all through, and I would

not mention it were it not that it is a factor in the formation of anti-white-culture opinion among the mass of the West Africans, and that it causes your West African bush chief to listen to the old woman whom you may see crouching behind him, or you may not see at all, but who is with him all the same, when she says, "Do not listen to the white man, it is bad for you." He knows that the interpreter talking to him for the white man may be a boughten man, paid to advertise the advantages of white ways; and he knows that the old woman, his mother, cannot be bought where his interest is concerned: so he listens to her, and she distrusts white ways.

I am aware that there is now in West Africa a handful of Africans who have mastered white culture, who know it too well to misunderstand the inner spirit of it, who are men too true to have let it cut them off in either love or sympathy from Africa—men that, had England another system that would allow her to see them as they are, would be of greater use to her and Africa than they now are; but I will not name them: I fight a lone fight, and wish to mix no man, white or black, up in it, or my heretical opinions. That handful of African men are now fighting a hard enough fight to prevent the distracted, uninformed Africans from rising against what looks so like white treachery, though it is only white want of knowledge; and also against those "water flies" who are neither Africans nor Europeans, but who are the curse of the Coast—the men who mislead the white man and betray the black.

Next to this there is another factor almost equally powerful, with which I presume you cannot sympathise, and which I should make a mess of if I trusted myself to explain. Therefore I call in the aid of a better writer, speaking on another race, but talking of the identical same thing. "In these days the boot of the ubiquitous white man leaves its mark on all the fair places of the earth, and scores thereon an even more gigantic track than that which affrighted Robinson

Crusoe in his solitude. It crushes down the forest, beats out roads, strides across the rivers, kicks down native institutions, and generally tramples on the growths of natives and the works of primitive man, reducing all things to that dead level of conventionality which we call civilisation.

"Incidentally it stamps out much of what is best in the customs and characteristics of the native races against which it brushes; and though it relieves him of many things which hurt or oppressed him ere it came, it injures him morally almost as much as it benefits him materially. We who are white men admire our work not a little—which is natural, and many are found willing to wear out their souls in efforts to convert the thirteenth century into the nineteenth in a score of years. The natives, who for the most part are frank Vandals, also admire efforts of which they are aware that they are themselves incapable, and even the *laudator temporis acti* has his mouth stopped by the cheap and often tawdry luxury which the coming of the white man has placed within his reach. So effectually has the heel of the white man been ground into the face of Pérak and Selangor, that these native states are now only nominally what their name implies. The white population outnumbers the people of the land in most of the principal districts, and it is possible for a European to spend weeks in either of these states without coming into contact with any Asiatics save those who wait at table, clean his shirts, or drive his cab. It is possible, I am told, for a European to spend years in Pérak or Selangor without acquiring any profound knowledge of the natives, of the country or of the language which is their special medium. This being so, most of the white men who live in the protected native states are somewhat apt to disregard the effect their actions have upon the natives, and labour under the common European inability to view natives from a native standpoint. Moreover, we have become accustomed to existing conditions; and thus it is that few perhaps realise the precise nature of the work which the

British in the Peninsula have set themselves to accomplish. What we are really attempting, however, is nothing less than to crush into twenty years the revolution in facts and in ideas, which, even in energetic Europe, six long centuries have been needed to accomplish. No one will, of course, be found to dispute that the strides made in our knowledge of the art of government since the thirteenth century are prodigious and vast, nor that the general condition of the people of Europe has been immensely improved since that day; but nevertheless one cannot but sympathise with the Malays who are suddenly and violently translated from the point to which they have attained in the natural development of their race, and are required to live up to the standard of a people who are six centuries in advance of them in national progress. If a plant is made to blossom or bear fruit three months before its time it is regarded as a triumph of the gardener's art; but what then are we to say of this huge moral forcing system we call 'protection'? Forced plants we know suffer in the process; and the Malay, whose proper place is amidst the conditions of the thirteenth century, is apt to become morally weak and seedy and lose something of his robust self respect when he is forced to bear nineteenth century fruit."[1]

Now, the above represents the state of affairs caused by the clash of different culture levels in the true Negro States, as well as it does in the Malay. These two sets of men, widely different in breed, have, from the many points of agreement in their State-form, evidently both arrived in our thirteenth century. The African peoples in the Central East, and East, and South, except where they are true Negroes, have not arrived in the thirteenth century, or, to put it in other words, the True Negro stem in Africa has arrived at a political state akin to that of our own thirteenth century, whereas the Bantu stem has not; this point, however, I need not enter into here.

There are, of course, local differences between the

[1] *East Coast Etchings*. H. Clifford, Singapore, 1896.

Malay Peninsula and West Africa, but the main characteristics as regards the State-form among the natives are singularly alike. They are both what Mr. Clifford aptly likens to our own European State-form in the thirteenth century; and the effect of the white culture on the morals of the natives is also alike. The main difference between them results from the Malay Peninsula being but a narrow strip of land and thinly peopled, compared to the densely populated section of a continent we call West Africa. Therefore, although the Malay in his native state is a superior individual warrior to the West African, yet there are not so many of him; and as he is less guarded from whites by a pestilential climate, his resistance to the white culture of the nineteenth century is inferior to the resistance which the West African can give.

The destruction of what is good in the thirteenth century culture level, and the fact that when the nineteenth century has had its way the main result is seedy demoralised natives, is the thing that must make all thinking men wonder if, after all, such work is from a high moral point of view worth the nineteenth century doing. I so often think when I hear the progress of civilisation, our duty towards the lower races, &c., talked of, as if those words were in themselves Ju Ju, of that improving fable of the kind-hearted she-elephant, who, while out walking one day, inadvertently trod upon a partridge and killed it, and observing close at hand the bird's nest full of callow fledglings, dropped a tear, and saying "I have the feelings of a mother myself," sat down upon the brood. This is precisely what England representing the nineteenth century is doing in thirteenth century West Africa. She destroys the guardian institution, drops a tear and sits upon the brood with motherly intentions; and pesky warm sitting she finds it, what with the nature of the brood and the surrounding climate, let alone the expense of it. And what profit she is going to get out of such proceedings there, I own I don't know. "Ah!" you say, "yes, it is sad, but it is inevitable." I do not think it is inevitable,

unless you have no intellectual constructive Statecraft, and are merely in that line an automaton. If you will try Science, all the evils of the clash between the two culture periods could be avoided, and you could assist these West Africans in their thirteenth century state to rise into their nineteenth century state without their having the hard fight for it that you yourself had. This would be a grand humanitarian bit of work; by doing it you would raise a monument before God to the honour of England such as no nation has ever yet raised to Him on earth.

There is absolutely no perceivable sound reason why you should not do it if you will try Science and master the knowledge of the nature of the native and his country. The knowledge of native laws, religion, institutions, and state-form would give you the knowledge of what is good in these things, so that you might develop and encourage them; and the West African, having reached a thirteenth century state, has institutions and laws which with a strengthening from the European hand would, by their operation now, stamp out the evil that exists under the native state. What you are doing now, however, is the direct contrary to this: you are destroying the good portion and thereby allowing what is evil, or imperfect, in it as in all things human, to flourish under your protection far more rankly than under the purely native thirteenth century state-form, with Fetish as a state religion, it could possibly do.

I know, however, there is one great objection to your taking up a different line towards native races to that which you are at present following. It is one of those strange things that are in men's minds almost without their knowing they are there, yet which, nevertheless, rule them. This is the idea that those Africans are, as one party would say, steeped in sin, or, as another party would say, a lower or degraded race. While you think these things, you must act as you are acting. They really are the same idea in different clothes. They both presuppose all mankind to have sprung from a single pair of human beings, and the condition of a race

to-day therefore to be to its own credit or blame. I remember one day in Cameroons coming across a young African lady, of the age of twelve, who I knew was enjoying the advantages of white tuition at a school. So, in order to open up conversation, I asked her what she had been learning. "Ebberyting," she observed with a genial smile. I asked her then what she knew, so as to approach the subject from a different standpoint for purposes of comparison. "Ebberyting," she said. This hurt my vanity, for though I am a good deal more than twelve years of age, I am far below this state of knowledge; so I said, "Well, my dear, and if you do, you're the person I have long wished to meet, for you can tell me why you are black." "Oh yes," she said, with a perfect beam of satisfaction, "one of my pa's pa's saw dem Patriark Noah wivout his clothes." I handed over to her a crimson silk necktie that I was wearing, and slunk away, humbled by superior knowledge. This, of course, was the result of white training direct on the African mind; the story which you will often be told to account for the blackness and whiteness of men by Africans who have not been in direct touch with European, but who have been in touch with Mohammedan, tradition—which in the main has the same Semitic source—is that when Cain killed Abel, he was horrified at himself, and terrified of God; and so he carried the body away from beside the altar where it lay, and carried it about for years trying to hide it, but not knowing how, growing white the while with the horror and the fear; until one day he saw a crow scratching a hole in the desert sand, and it struck him that if he made a hole in the sand and put the body in, he could hide it from God, so he did; but all his children were white, and from Cain came the white races, while Abel's children are black, as all men were before the first murder. The present way of contemplating different races, though expressed in finer language, is practically identical with these; not only the religious view, but the view of the suburban agnostic. The religious European cannot avoid re-

garding the races in a different and inferior culture state to his own as more deeply steeped in sin than himself, and the suburban agnostic regards them as "degraded" or "retarded" either by environment, or microbes, or both.

I openly and honestly own I sincerely detest touching on this race question. For one thing, Science has not finished with it; for another, it belongs to a group of subjects of enormous magnitude, upon which I have no opinion, but merely feelings, and those of a nature which I am informed by superior people would barely be a credit to a cave man of the palæolithic period. My feelings classify the world's inhabitants into Englishmen, by which I mean Teutons at large, Foreigners, and Blacks, whom I subdivide into two classes, English Blacks and Foreign Blacks. English Blacks are Africans. Foreign Blacks are Indians, Chinese and the rest. Of course, everything that is not Teutonic is, to put it mildly, not up to what is; and equally, of course, I feel more at home with, and hold in greater esteem the English Black: a great strong Kruman, for example, with his front teeth filed, nothing much on but oil, half a dozen wives, and half a hundred Ju Jus, is a sort of person whom I hold higher than any other form of native, let the other form dress in silk, satin, or cashmere, and make what pretty things he pleases. This is, of course, a general view; but I am often cornered for the detail view, whether I can reconcile my admiration for Africans with my statement that they are a different kind of human being to white men. Naturally I can, to my own satisfaction, just as I can admire an oak tree or a palm; but it is an uncommonly difficult thing to explain. All I can say is, that when I come back from a spell in Africa, the thing that makes me proud of being one of the English is not the manners or customs up here, certainly not the houses or the climate; but it is the thing embodied in a great railway engine. I once came home on a ship with an Englishman who had been in South West Africa for seven unbroken years; he was sane, and in his right mind. But no sooner did we get ashore

at Liverpool, than he rushed at and threw his arms round a postman, to that official's embarrassment and surprise. Well, that is just how I feel about the first magnificent bit of machinery I come across: it is the manifestation of the superiority of my race.

In philosophic moments I call superiority difference, from a feeling that it is not mine to judge the grade in these things. Careful scientific study has enforced on me, as it has on other students, the recognition that the African mind naturally approaches all things from a spiritual point of view. Low down in culture or high up, his mind works along the line that things happen because of the action of spirit upon spirit; it is an effort for him to think in terms of matter. We think along the line that things happen from the action of matter upon matter. If it were not for the Asiatic religion we have accepted, it is, I think, doubtful whether we should not be far more materialistic in thought-form than we are. This steady sticking to the material side of things, I think, has given our race its dominion over matter; the want of it has caused the African to be notably behind us in this, and far behind those Asiatic races who regard matter and spirit as separate in essence, a thing that is not in the mind either of the Englishman or the African. The Englishman is constrained by circumstances to perceive the existence of an extra material world. The African regards spirit and matter as undivided in kind, matter being only the extreme low form of spirit. There must be in the facts of the case behind things, something to account for the high perception of justice you will find in the African, combined with an inability to think out a pulley or a lever except under white tuition. Similarly, taking the true Negro States, which are in their equivalent to our thirteenth century, it accounts for the higher level of morals in them than you would find in our thirteenth century; and I fancy this want of interest and inferiority in materialism in the true Negro constitutes a reason why they will not come into our nineteenth century, but, under proper guidance could attain to a nineteenth century state of their own,

which would show a proportionate advance. The analogy of the influence of the culture of Rome, or rather let us say the culture of Greece spread by the force of Rome, upon Barbarian culture is one often used to justify the hope that English culture will have a similar effect on the African. This I do not think is so. It is true the culture of Rome lifted the Barbarians from what one might call culture 9 to culture 17, but the Romans and the Barbarians were both white races. But you see now a similar lift in culture in Africa by the influence of Mohammedan culture, for example in the Hausa States and again in the Western Soudan, where there is no fundamental race difference.

In both English and Mohammedan Berber influence on the African there is another factor, apart from race difference; namely, that the two higher cultures are in a healthier state than that of Rome was at the time it mastered the Barbarian mind; in both cases the higher culture has the superior war force.

This seems to me simply to lay upon us English for the sake of our honour that we keep clean hands and a cool head, and be careful of Justice; to do this we must know what there is we wish to wipe out of the African, and what there is we wish to put in, and so we must not content ourselves by relying materially on our superior wealth and power, and morally on catch phrases. All we need look to is justice. Love of our fellow-man, pity, charity, mercy, we need not bother our heads about, so long as we are just. These things are of value only when they are used as means whereby we can attain justice. It is no use saying that it matters to a Teuton whether the other race he deals with is black, white, yellow—I can quite conceive that we should look down on a pea-green form of humanity if we had the chance. Naturally, I think this shows a very proper spirit. I should be the last to alter any of our Teutonic institutions to please any race; but when it comes to altering the institutions of another race, not for the reason even of pleasing ourselves but merely on the plea that we don't understand them, we are on different ground. If

those ideas and institutions stand in the way of our universal right to go anywhere we choose and live as honest gentlemen, we have the power-right to alter them; but if they do not we must judge them from as near a standard of pure Justice as we can attain to.

There are many who hold murder the most awful crime a man can commit, saying that thereby he destroys the image of his Maker; I hold that one of the most awful crimes one nation can commit on another is destroying the image of Justice, which in an institution is represented more truly to the people by whom the institution has been developed, than in any alien institution of Justice; it is a thing adapted to its environment. This form of murder by a nation I see being done in the destruction of what is good in the laws and institutions of native races. In some parts of the world, this murder, judged from certain reasonable standpoints, gives you an advantage; in West Africa, judged from any standpoint you choose to take, it gives you no advantage. By destroying native institutions there, you merely lower the moral of the African race, stop trade, and with it the culture advantages it brings both to England and West Africa. I again refer you to the object lesson before you now, the hut tax war in Sierra Leone. Awful accusations have been made against the officers and men who had the collecting of this tax. In the matter of the native soldiery, there is no doubt these accusations are only too well founded, but the root thing was the murder of institutions. The worst of the whole of this miserable affair is that a precisely similar miserable affair may occur at any time in any of our West African Crown Colonies—to-morrow, any day—until you choose to remove the Crown Colony system of government.

It has naturally been exceedingly hard for men who know the colony and the natives, with the experience of years in an unsentimental commercial way, to keep civil tongues in their heads while their interests were being wrecked by the action of the Government; but whether or no the white officers were or were not brutal in their

methods we must presume will be shown by Sir David Chalmers's report. I am unable to believe they were. But there is no manner of doubt that outrages have been committed, disgraceful to England, by the set of riff-raff rascal Blacks, who had been turned out by, or who had run away from, the hinterland tribes down into Sierra Leone Colony, and there been turned, by an ill-informed government, into police, and sent back with power into the very districts from which they had, shortly before, fled for their crimes. I entirely sympathise, therefore, with the rage of Liverpool and Manchester, and of every clear-minded common-sense Englishman who knows what a thing the hut tax war has been. And I want common-sense Englishmen to recognise that a system capable of such folly, and under which such a thing could happen in an English possession, is a system that must go. For a system that gets short of money, from its own want of business-like ability, and then against all expert advice goes and does the most unscientific thing conceivable under the circumstances, to get more, is a thing that is a disgrace to England. Yet the Sierra Leone Colony was capable of this folly, and the people in London were capable of saying to Liverpool and Manchester, that no difficulty was expected from the collection of the tax. If this is so in our oldest colony, what reason have we to believe that in the others we are safer? Any of them, in combination with London, may to-morrow go and do the most unscientific thing conceivable, and disgrace England, in order to procure more local revenue, and fail at that.

The desire to develop our West African possessions is a worthy one in its way, but better leave it totally alone than attempt it with your present machinery; which the moment it is called upon to deal with the administration of the mass of the native inhabitants gives such a trouble. And remember it is not the only trouble your Crown Colony system can give; it has a few glorious opportunities left of further supporting everything I have said about it, and more. But I will say no more. You have got a grand rich region there, populated by

an uncommon fine sort of human being. You have been trying your present set of ideas on it for over 400 years; they have failed in a heart-breaking drizzling sort of way to perform any single solitary one of the things you say you want done there. West Africa to-day is just a quarry of paving-stones for Hell, and those stones were cemented in places with men's blood mixed with wasted gold.

Prove it! you say. Prove it to yourself by going there —I don't mean to Blazes—but to West Africa.

CHAPTER XVII

AN ALTERNATIVE PLAN

Wherein the student, having said divers harsh things of those who destroy but do not reconstruct, recognises that, having attempted destruction, it is but seemly to set forth some other way whereby the West African colonies could be managed.

WEST AFRICA, I own, is a make of country difficult for a power with a different kind of culture, climate and set of institutions, and so on, to manage from Europe satisfactorily. But, as things go, I venture to think it presents no insuperable difficulty ; that all the difficulties that exist in this matter are difficulties arising from misunderstandings—things removable, not things of essence, barring only fever.

Also I feel convinced that no one of our English governmental methods at present existing is suitable for its administration. It is no use saying, Look at our Indian system, why not just introduce that into West Africa? I have the greatest admiration for our Indian system ; it is the right thing in the right place, thanks to its having healthily grown up, fostered by experts, military and civil. Nevertheless it would not do for West Africa to-day. What we want there is the sowing of a similar system, not the transplanting of the Indian in its perfect form, for that is to-day for West Africa infinitely too expensive. If a man before his fortune is made spends a fortune, he ends badly ; if he measures his

expenditure with his income and develops his opportunities, he ends as a millionaire; and we must never forget that great dictum that the State is the perfection of the individual man, and should mould our politics accordingly.

I hold it to be a sound and healthy idea of ours that our possessions over-sea should pay their own way, and I therefore distrust the cucumber-frame form of financial politics that at present holds the field in West African affairs. It has been the pride and boast of the West African colonies that they have paid their way; let it remain so. It seems to me unsound that our colonies there should receive loans wherewith to carry on; for, for one thing, it makes them carry on more than is good for them, and merely means a piling up of debt; and, for another, it gives West Africa the notion that it is England's business to support her, which to my mind it distinctly is not; for if we wanted a lapdog set of colonies we could get healthier ones elsewhere. Moreover, it pauperises instead of fostering the proper pride, without which nothing can flourish.

Apart from our Indian system, we have, for governing those regions where our race cannot locally produce a sufficient population of its own to take the reins of government out of the hands of officialdom in England, only two other systems, namely, the Chartered Company and the Crown Colony. I beg to urge that it is high time we had a third system. Concerning the Crown Colony system for Africa, I have spoken as tolerantly as I believe it is possible for any one acquainted with its working in West Africa to speak. If I were to say any more I might say something uncivil, which, of course, I do not wish to do. Concerning the Chartered Company system, I need only remark that there are two distinct breeds of Chartered Companies—the one whose attention is turned to the trade, the other whose attention is turned to the lands over which its charter gives it dominion. The first kind is represented in Africa by the Royal Niger Company, the second by the South African.

The second form of Chartered Company, that inter-

ested in land, we have not in West Africa under the name of a Company; but the present Crown Colony system represents it, and I feel certain that whatever good the South African Company may have done for the empire in South Africa, it has done an immense amount of harm in Western Africa. For some, to me unknown, reason the South African Company has found favour in the sight of officialdom in London; and, fascinated by its success in South Africa, yet recognising its drawbacks, officialdom has attempted to introduce what they regard as best in the South African system into West Africa. I do not think any student can avoid coming to the conclusion that the policy which is now driving the Crown Colonies in West Africa is one and the same with that of Mr. Rhodes. I do not mean that Mr. Rhodes, had he had the handling of West Africa, would himself have used this form of policy. He formulated it for South Africa; but, with his careful study of such things as local needs, he would have formulated another form for West Africa, which is a totally different region.

To take only two of the differences, and state them brutally. First, in West Africa the most valuable asset you have is the native: the more heavily the district there is populated with Africans, and the more prosperous those natives are, the better for you; for it means more trade. All the gold, ivory, oil, rubber, and timber in West Africa are useless to you without the African to work them; you can get no other race that can replace him, and work them; the thing has now been tried, and it has failed. Whereas in South Africa the converse is true: you can do without the African there, you can replace him with pretty nearly any other kind of man you like, or do the work yourself. The second difference is, that the land in South Africa is worth your having, you can go and domesticate on it; whereas in West Africa you cannot. A failure to recognise these differences is at the root of our present ill-judged West African policy, outside the Royal Niger Company's domain; by introducing South African methods we are

trying to get what is of no use to us, the *Landes Hoheit*, and thereby devastating what is of use to us, the trade.

However, I will not detain you over this interesting question of Chartered Company government. I merely wish to draw your attention to the two breeds, the Land Company, and the Trade Company; and to urge that they are things to be applied in their respective proper environments. I can honestly assure you, I know every blessed, single, mortal thing that can be said against the trade form which I admire, for I have lived under a hail of this sort of information since I was discovered by my big Ju Ju, Liverpool, to be such an admirer of what I called a co-ordinate system of government and trade, and Liverpool called divers things.

I shall go to my grave believing that Liverpool had reasons for attacking the Trade Company, but neglected fundamental facts in its controversy with that Company, which, to it, was "a little more than kith, and less than kind." The Royal Niger Company has demonstrated its adaptation to its environment. Without any forced labour, without any direct taxation, it has paid. I venture to think, though I have no doubt it would severely hurt the feelings of the R.N.C., that we may regard the Royal Niger Company as representing the perfected system of native government in West Africa plus English courage and activity. I believe that on this foundation has been built its success. For, say what you like, if the Royal Niger had not got on well with the natives in its territories—dealt cleanly, honestly, rationally with them—it would never have extended its influence in the grand way it has, represented only by a mere handful of white men, in what is, as far as we know, the most densely populated region with the highest and most organised form of native power in all tropical Africa. Had it not been to the natives it ruled a just, honourable, and desirable form of government, it would long ago have been stamped out by them, or would have been compelled to call in England's armed support to maintain it, as

the Crown Colony system has been compelled to do in Sierra Leone and on the Gold Coast. It has not had to call in Imperial assistance, and it has paid its shareholders—a sound, healthy conduct; but, nevertheless, remember that all the great debt of gratitude you and every one of the English owe the Royal Niger Company for defending the honour of England against Continental enterprise, for maintaining the honour of England in the eyes of the native races with whom it had made treaties, you do not owe to the Chartered Company *system*, but to Sir George Goldie, the man who had to use it because it was the *best* existing system available for such a region. You have too much sense to give all the honour to Lord Kitchener of Khartoum's sword, though a sword is an excellent thing. I trust, therefore, you have too much sense to give all honour to the Chartered Company, even when it is a trading company. Trade is an excellent thing, but, in the case of the Royal Niger, this very factor, trade, restricts the man who uses the Chartered Company to a set of white men and a set of black. Therefore, never can I feel that either Liverpool or the Brass men have profited by the R.N.C. as they would have done if there had been a better system available for dealing with what Mr. St. Loe Strachey delicately calls "a dark-skinned population" with an insufficient local white population at hand. Briefly, I should say that the Chartered Company system keeps its "ain fish-guts for its ain sea-maws" too much. Therefore now, when, like many before me who have laboured strenuously to reform, I have given up the idea that reformation is possible for the individual on whom they have expended their powers, and have decided that there are some people whom you can only reform with a gun, I will start reforming myself, and say the Chartered Company system is not good enough, taken all round as things are, for West Africa for these reasons.

First, a Chartered Company consists of a band of merchants, ruling through, and by, a great man. If that great man who expands the influence and power

of the Company lives long enough to establish a form of policy, well and good. I have sufficient trust in the common sense of a band of English merchants, provided their interest is common, to believe they will adhere to the policy; but suppose he does not, or suppose you do not start with a good man, you will merely have a mess, as has been demonstrated by the perpetual failures of our French friends' Chartered Companies. By the way, I may remark that although France is no great admirer of the Chartered system with us, she is devoted to it for herself, sprinkling all her West African possessions with Companies freely, only unfortunately, as their names are usually far longer than their banking accounts, they do not grow conspicuous; even apart from these private and subsidised Chartered Companies in French possessions, France follows the Chartered system imperially in West Africa by keeping out non-French trade with differential tariffs, and so on. But, after all, in this matter she is no worse than English critics of the Royal Niger; and it is a common trait of all West African palavers that those who criticise are amply well provided themselves with the very faults they find so repulsive in others—it's the climate.

Secondly, the Chartered Company represents English trade interests in sections, instead of completely; English honour, common sense, military ability, and so on, the Royal Niger under Sir George Goldie has represented more perfectly than these things have ever been represented in West—or, I may safely say, Africa at large; but the trade interests of England it has only represented partially, or in other words, it has only represented the trade interests of its shareholders and the natives it has made treaties with, and what we want is something that will represent our trade interests there as a whole. Therefore, I do not advocate it as the general system for West Africa, for under another sort of man it might mean merely a more rapid crash than we are in for with the Crown Colony system. To my dying day I shall honour that great Trade Company, the Royal Niger, for representing England,

that is, England properly so-called, to the world at large, during one of the darkest ages we have ever had since Charles II.; and, I believe that it, with the Committee of Merchants who held the Gold Coast for England after the battle of Katamansu, when her officials would have abandoned alike the Gold Coast and her honour in West Africa, will stand out in our history as grand things, but yet I say we want another system.

"Du binst der Geist der stets verneint!" you ejaculate. You do not like Crown Colonies. You won't grovel to Chartered Companies, however good. You prove, on your own showing, that there is not in West Africa a sufficiently large, or a sufficiently long resident, local English population—what with their constantly leaving for home or for the cemetery—to form an independent colony. What else remains?

Well, I humbly beg to say that there is another system—a system that pays in all round peace and prosperity—a system whereby a region with a native population—a lively one in a thirteenth century culture state—of about 30,000,000, is ruled. The total value of exports from the regions I refer to averages £14,000,000, out of a country of very much the same make as West Africa; the floating capital in its trade is some £25,000,000; its actual land area is 562,540 square miles; yet its trade with its European country amounts, nevertheless, to at least one half of that carried on between India and England. If you apply the system that has built this thing up, practically since 1830, to West Africa, you will not get the above figures out in forty years; but you will get at least two-thirds of them; and that would be a grand rise on your present West African figures, and in time you could surpass these figures, for West Africa is far larger, and far nearer European markets, and you have the advantage of superior shipping.

The region I am citing is not so unhealthy for whites as West Africa. Still, it has a stiff death-rate of its own; even nowadays, when it has pulled that death-rate

down by Science—a thing, I may remark, you never trouble your head about in West Africa, or think worthy of your serious attention.

I will not insult your knowledge by telling you where this system is working to-day, or who works it, and all that. The same consideration also bars me from applying for a patent for this system; for although I lay it before you altered to what I think suitable for West Africa, the main lines of the system remain. The only thing I confess that makes me shaky about its being applied to West Africa is, that this system requires and must have experts black and white to work it, both at home in England and out in West Africa. Still, you have a sufficient supply of such experts, if only you would not leave things so largely in the hands of clerks and amateurs; who, with the assistance of faddists and renegade Africans, break up the native true Negro culture state, leaving you little sound stuff to work on in the regions now under the Crown Colony system.

Before I proceed to sketch the skeleton of the other system, I must lay before you briefly the present political state of West Africa in the words of the greatest living expert on the subject, as they are given in a remarkable article in the *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1898.

"The weighty utterance of Sir George Goldie should never be forgotten, 'Central African races and tribes have, broadly speaking, no sentiment of patriotism as understood in Europe.' There is, therefore, little difficulty in inducing them to accept what German jurisconsults term 'Ober Hoheit,' which corresponds with our interpretation of our vague term 'Protectorate.' But when complete sovereignty or 'Landes Hoheit,' is conceded, they invariably stipulate that their local customs and systems of government shall be respected. On this point they are, perhaps, more tenacious than most subject races with whom the British Empire has had to deal; while their views and ideas of life are extremely difficult for an Englishman to understand. It is therefore certain that even an imperfect and tyranni-

cal native African administration, if its extreme excesses were controlled by European supervision, would be in the early stages productive of far less discomfort to its subjects than well-intentioned but ill-directed efforts of European magistrates, often young and headstrong, and not invariably gifted with sympathy and introspective powers. If the welfare of the native races is to be considered, if dangerous revolts are to be obviated, the general policy of ruling on African principles through native rulers must be followed for the present. Yet it is desirable that considerable districts in suitable localities should be administered on European principles by European officials, partly to serve as types to which the native governments may gradually approximate, but principally as cities of refuge in which individuals of more advanced views may find a living if native government presses unduly upon them, just as in Europe of the Middle Ages men whose love of freedom found the iron-bound system of feudalism intolerable, sought eagerly the comparative liberty of cities."[1]

There are a good many points in the above classic passage on which I would fain become diffuse, but I forbear; merely begging you to note carefully the wording of that part concerning government by natives ruling on African principles, because here is a pitfall for the hasty. You will be told that this is the present policy in Crown Colonies—but it is not. What they are doing is ruling on European principles through natives, which is a horse of another colour entirely and makes it hot work for the unfortunate native catspaw chief, and so all round unsatisfactory that no really self-respecting native chief will take it on.

Well, to return to that other system: what it has got to do is to unite English interests—administrative, commercial and educational—into one solid whole, and combine these with native interests; briefly, to be a system where the Englishman and the African co-operate together for their mutual benefit and advancement,

[1] Preface by Sir George Goldie to Vandeleur's *Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger*, 1898.

and therefore it must be a representative system, and one of those groups of representative systems which form the British Empire.

For reasons I need not discuss here it must be a duplicate system, with an English and an African side, these two united and responsible to the English Crown, but both having as great a share of individual freedom in Africa as possible. By and by the necessity for the duplicate system may disappear, but at present it is necessary.

I will take the English side first. There should be in England an African Council, in whose hands is the power of voting supplies and of appointing the Governor-General, subject to the approval of the Crown, and to whom firms trading in Africa should be answerable for the actions of their representatives. This council should be of nominated members, from the Chambers of Commerce of Liverpool, Manchester, London, Bristol, and Glasgow. Of course, they should not be paid members. This council would occupy a similar position in West African administration to that which the House of Commons occupies in English.

Under this Grand Council there should be two sub-councils reporting to it, one a joint committee of English lawyers and medical men, the other a committee of the native chiefs. Neither of these councils should be paid, but sufficient should be granted them to pay their working expenses. The members of these sub-councils of the Grand Council should be appointed—the medical and legal committee by say, the Lord Chancellor and the College of Physicians respectively, and the committee of African chiefs by the chiefs in West Africa.

I make no pretence at believing that either of these sub-councils for the first few years of their existence will be dove-cots—lawyers and doctors will always fight each other: but the lawyers will hold the doctors in and *vice versa*, and the common sense of the Grand Council will hold them both well down to practical politics. With the council of chiefs there will probably be less trouble, and this council will be an ambassador to the

white government at headquarters capable of representing to it native opinion and native requirements.

Representing the Grand Council and nominated by it, subject to the approval of the Crown, as represented by the Chief Secretary for the Colonies and the Privy Council, there must be one Governor-General for West Africa; he must be supreme commander of the land and sea forces, with the right of declaring peace and war, and concluding treaties with the native chiefs; he must be a proved expert in West African affairs; he must be paid, say, £5,000 a year; he must spend six months on the Coast on a tour of inspection, during which he must be accessible alike to the European and native. He may, if he sees fit, spend more than six months out there; but it is not advisable he should reside there permanently, for if he does so, he will assuredly get out of touch with the Grand Council, of which he should *ex officio* be chairman or president. This Grand Council with its sub-councils is all that is required in England for the government of West Africa. It is not, as you see, an expensive system *per se*: with its power to raise supplies, it could vote itself sufficient to carry on its out-of-pocket expenses in the matter of clerks and goods inspectors. The connecting link between it and Africa is the Governor-General; between it and England, the Chief Secretary for the Colonies —not the Colonial, or Foreign, or any other existing Office: things it should be equal with, not subject to.

Out in Africa, the Governor-General should be the representative of the English *raj*—the Ober Hoheit of England—and the head of the system of Landes Hoheit, represented by the African chiefs; in him the two must join. Under his control, on the European side, must be the few European officials required to administer the country locally. These must be carefully picked, experienced men, provided with sufficient power to enforce their rule with promptitude when it comes to details; but the policy of the Ober Hoheit should be the policy of the Governor and Grand Council, not of the individual official.

Immediately in grade under the Governor-General should come a set of district commissioners or governors, one for each of the present colonies. These men should be the resident representatives of the Governor-General, and responsible to him for the affairs, trade and political, of their districts. These district commissioners should be paid £2,000 a year each, and have a term of residence on the Coast of twelve months, with six months' furlough at home on half pay, the other half of the pay going to the men who represent them during their absence at home—the senior sub-commissioners of their districts.[1]

The next grade are the sub-commissioners. These are only required in the districts now termed Protectorates; the Europeanised coast towns to be under a different system I will sketch later. Well, these Protectorate districts should be divided up among sub-commissioners, who should each reside in his allotted district. They should be responsible directly to the district commissioner, and they should represent to him constantly the chiefs' council of the sub-district and the trade, and on the other hand represent trade and the Ober Hoheit things to the native chiefs. These men, therefore, will be the backbone of the system, and primarily on them will depend its success; so they must be expert men—well acquainted with the native culture state, and with the trade. Each of these sub-commissioners should have in his district, his own town, from which he should

[1] The time which a man ought to be expected to remain in West Africa is difficult to determine—representatives of trading firms are expected to remain out two years, and the mortality among them is certainly no higher than among the officials with their twelve months' service. It is contended by the commercial party that it takes a man several months after returning from furlough to get into working order again, that under the twelve months' system no sooner has he done this than he is off on furlough again, in short that the system is foolish and wasteful in the extreme. On the other hand the advocates of the short service plan contend that a man is not fit for work at all after twelve months in West Africa, and that if he is not definitely ill, he has at any rate lost all energy. Personally, I fancy it depends on the individual, and that with a definite policy the short service plan will be quite safe.

frequently make tours of inspection round his district at large; but this town should be what Sir George Goldie calls "a town of refuge." English law should rule in it absolutely, administered by an official, one of the class of men approved by the legal sub-council of the Grand Council. The sub-commissioner should also have in his town a medical staff of three men, nominated by the medical side of the sub-council of the Grand Council. These three (chief medical, assistant medical, and dispenser) should have a hospital provided, where they can carry on their work properly. Also in this town should be the military force sufficient to enforce rule in the district—either to go and prevent one chief bagging another chief's belongings, or to assist a chief in a domestic crisis. It is impossible to say how large a military staff a sub-commissioner would require; some districts would require no more than fifty soldiers, while another might require 200. Details of this kind the Governor-General must decide; but whatever size this force may be, it should be composed of troops under efficient military control. I believe the West Indian troops to be the best for this service; but here again you will meet, if you take the trouble to inquire of people who ought to know, the greatest haziness of mind combined with an enormous difference of opinion. Some will tell you that the West Indians are no good, that they are cowardly and unfit for bush work, and require as many carriers as a white regiment. Others say the opposite, and hold forth on the evil of using raw savages as troops in such a country, and placing men who have been cast out on account of crime into positions of power and authority in the very districts wherein all the power they should have by rights would be to swing at the end of a rope.

There is much to be said on both sides; the only thing I will say is that military affairs in West Africa are in much the same scrappy mess as civil, and require reorganisation. There is, no doubt, excellent fighting material in many West African tribes, and turbulent native spirits are all the better for military organisation

and discipline; it is certain, however, that such men should be deported from districts wherein they have private scores to settle, and used elsewhere after they have been disciplined. If it were possible for the native regiments now being drilled in the hinterlands of our colonies out there to be used actively to guard our people from foreign aggression, there would be a good reason for having them, but recent events have demonstrated, in the Gold Coast hinterland for example, that they cannot, according to Government notions, be so employed. Therefore they are worse than useless, for they merely add to the unjustifiable aggressions on the native residents by aggressions of their own; such things as native police under the white Government side for the districts of the protectorate should not exist. They are a sort of wild fowl who will get you and themselves into more rows than they will ever get any one out of, and they will squeeze you and the native population into the bargain. The chiefs of the district should be responsible for the internal administration of justice among their own people. If a chief fails in this he should be removed, with the assistance of the military force at the command of the sub-commissioner. When, in fact, a chief is found to be going astray, the fact should be promptly brought before the council of chiefs; a definite short time, say a month, should be allowed them to bring him to his bearings, and if at the expiration of this time they fail to do so, without any further delay the sub-commissioner should step in. In a very short time the chiefs' council would see the advisability of keeping this from happening, and also see that it can only be prevented by enforcing good government among themselves.

Well, this West Indian guard should of course be under its proper military officers, and at the disposal of the sub-commissioner, and well installed in barracks, and made generally as happy as circumstances will permit.

Then again in each town which forms the centre of a sub-commissioner's district there should be representatives of any firms who may wish to trade there. They can each

have their separate factories, or form a local association for working the trade of the district as it pleases them. I think it would be advisable that in each of these towns away in the interior there should be a warehouse, whereto all goods coming up for the separate trading firms should be delivered, and wherein all exports ready for transport to the coast should be lodged, and the figures concerning these things ascertained. This should be the business of the sub-commissioner's secretary, and he can be aided in it by a black clerk. But it would not be a custom-house, because customs, like native regiments, do not exist out there under this system.

If any of the firms like to establish sub-factories in the district outside the town, they should have every facility impartially afforded them to do so. Any attack made on them by the natives should be promptly revenged, but outside the town in all trade matters the native law should rule under the administration of the local chief, with a power (in important cases—say, over £20 involved) of appeal to the chiefs' council, and from that, if need be to the sub-commissioner.

Now in this town, acting with and directing the council of chiefs, you will have all that the hinterland districts in West Africa at present require for their administration and development, except, you will say, religion and education. As for the first, as represented by the missions, I think they will do best away from the rest, as I will presently attempt to explain. As for education, that will be in their hands too, and with them. The missionary stations about the district, however, will be under the direct control and protection of the sub-commissioner and his town. No gaol will be required there or elsewhere in West Africa; the sort of thing a gaol represents is better represented by a halter and convict labour gang. So much, as old Peter Heylin would say, for the sub-commission.

The district commissioner for a colony and its hinterland should have a residence at one of the chief towns on the coast, making tours round to his sub-commissioners as occasion requires; and he should always be

accessible both to his sub-commissioners and to the district chiefs. At his head town should be the headquarters of the military force required by his colony, and the headquarters of the labour service.

We will now turn to the administration of the coast towns, places that have been long in our possession and have a sufficient white and Europeanised African population to justify us in regarding them as English possessions in the Landes Hoheit sense. These towns should be governed by municipality, and should be under English law, having accredited magistrates approved of by the Grand Council and paid, not by the municipalities, but by the Grand Council.

Each municipality should occupy in the system an identical position to that occupied by the sub-commissioner in his town, and communicate with the district commissioner direct, receive all goods, and make returns of them to him. They should each have and be responsible for hospitals and schools within the town, and for its police, lighting, and sanitary affairs. Each municipality should be paid by the Government the same pay as a sub-commissioner, £1,000 a year. They should get their extra resources from a charge on the trade of the town at a fixed rate made by the Grand Council for all municipalities under the system.

This system would do away with the division of our possessions, at present so misleading and vexatious and unnecessary, into Colonies and Protectorates, and substitute for that division the just division into regions under our Landes Ober Hoheit (municipalities), and those under our Ober Hoheit—(sub-commissioners' districts). Both alike would be under the Governor-General as representing the Grand Council.

There still remains one important new development in our West African methods—the organisation of native labour. The institution of a regular and reliable labour supply seems to me one of the most vital things for the progress of West Africa. There is undoubtedly in West Africa an enormous supply of labour, and that the true negro can work and work well the Krumen

have amply demonstrated. All that is required is method and organisation. This you could easily supply. If, for example, you were to direct those energies of yours which are now employed in raising native regiments in the hinterland to raising and regulating a native labour army, it would be better. A native regiment of soldiers is a thing you do not want in any hinterland district, whereas the native regiment of labourers is a thing you do want very badly.

There is also in this connection another fact: while, under the present state of affairs, one colony will be choked with men anxious for work, and another colony will be starving for labour, if all the English colonies were united under one system, and a regular labour department were instituted, this would be obviated.

There exist in West Africa two sources of labour supply, but I think the Labour Department had better deal with only one of them—the free paid labour—the other, the convict, would be better placed under the kind care of the municipalities.

All persons convicted of offences other than capital, should be, at the discretion of the magistrates, sentenced to a fine, or so many weeks' labour. The whole of this labour should be devoted to the Public Works Department of the Municipality, not of the State, and above all, should not be sent away up into the hinterland, where there will be no one to look after it as convict labour requires. Quite apart from this, there should be the State Labour Department, whose jurisdiction would extend over both colony and hinterland, and whose white officials should be a distinct line in the service; one or more of these officials should be in every hinterland sub-commissioner's town. They would be recruiters and drillers of labourers, just as you now have recruiters and drillers of soldiers there; and a requisition should be made to all the chiefs, to draft into this labour army any person, under their rule, who might be anxious to serve as a labourer; and they should also have power to enrol any labour volunteer recruits that might come into the town,

provided the chiefs could not show a satisfactory reason against their so doing. This labour army should be divided up into suitably sized gangs, with a head man elected by his gang, and be employed in the transport work required by the Government, or let out by the Government to private individuals requiring labour within the district, or drafted to other English colonies on the Coast, if occasion required, to do certain jobs—I do not say for certain spaces of time, because piece-work is the best system for West Africa. An attempt should be made gradually to induce the hinterland chiefs to adopt the Kru social system, wherein every man serves so many years as a labourer, then, about the age of thirty, joins the army and becomes a compound soldier-policeman, ending up in honour and glory as a local magistrate. But it must be remembered that domestic slavery is not a great institution among the Kru tribes, as it is amongst the hinterland tribes in our colonies; the Kru system could not, therefore, be immediately introduced.

We now come to the question of where the revenue is to come from to support this system. There is no difficulty about that in itself; the difficulty comes in in the method to be employed in its collection. When one has a Chartered Trading Company it is, of course, a simple matter; when you have a Crown Colony it is done by means of the custom-house system. The alternative system, however, is not a Chartered Company; under it individual firms, so long as they can show sufficient capital and good faith, would work the details of their trade out there as freely and privately as in England. I think every effort should be made to do away in West Africa with the custom-house system as it exists in English Crown Colonies. In Cameroon it is better, but in our Crown Colonies and also in the Niger Coast Protectorate it is ruinous to the tempers of ship-masters and shippers, and the cause of a great waste of time—decidedly one of the main causes of the undue length of voyages to and from the Coast.

It seems to me that the revenue of our West African

possessions must be a charge on the trade; and that this charge should, as much as possible, be collected in Europe from the shippers instead of from their representatives on the Coast. If I were king in Babylon, I would make all the trade to West Africa pass through Liverpool and pay its customs there to a custom-house of the Grand Council, or through the English ports of the other chambers represented on the Grand Council—each chamber being responsible for the trade of its port. I am aware that this would cause difficulty with the increasing continental trade; but this would be obviated by affiliating Hamburg and Havre to the Council and giving into their hands the collection of the dues at those ports. The Grand Council should fix annually the amount of the trade tax, and it should have at its disposal for this matter the figures sent home by the separate district commissioners in West Africa. The sub-commissioner of a district should know the amount of trade his district was doing, and be paid a commission on it to stimulate his interest. If the goods used in his district were delivered at one warehouse in his town, he would have little difficulty in getting the figures, which he should pass on to the district commissioner, who should forward them to the Grand Council with report in duplicate to the Governor-General, so that that officer might keep his finger on the pulse of the prosperity of each district; similarly, the municipalities should report to him the trade done in the towns under their control.

In addition, the Government, that is to say, the Grand Council, should take over the monopoly of the tobacco import and the timber export. By using tobacco in the same way as European governments use coinage, an immense revenue could be very cheaply obtained. The Grand Council should sell the tobacco to the individual traders who work the West African markets, allowing no other tobacco to be used in the trade; this revenue also could be collected in Europe.

The timber industry should, I think, be under governmental control, both for the sake of providing

the Government with revenue and for the sake of protecting the forests from destruction in those districts where forest destruction is a danger to the common weal, by weakening the forest barriers against the Sahara.

The return that the Government should make for these monopolies to the independent trader should be, among other things, transport. In the course of a few years the Government would have in hand a sufficient surplus to build a pier across the Gold Coast surf. It is possible to build piers across the West Coast surf, for the French have done it. I would not advocate one great and mighty pier, that ocean-going steamers could go alongside, for all the Gold Coast ports, but a set of T-headed piers where surf boats or lighters could discharge, and the employment of stout steam tugs to tow surf boats and lighters to and fro between the lighters and the pier.

Then again, every mile of available waterway inland should be utilised, and patrolled by Government cargo boats of the lawn-mower or flat-iron brand, as the Chargeurs-Reunis are subsidised to patrol the Ogowé. On the Gold Coast you have the Volta and the Ancobra available for this; in Sierra Leone and Lagos you have many waterways penetrating inland.

Land transport should also be in the hands of the Government, and goods delivered free of extra charge at the towns of the sub-commissioners; this could be done by the Labour Department. When sufficient surplus revenue was in hand, light railways on the French system should be built, similarly delivering, free of freight, the goods belonging to the inland registered traders, but charging freight for passengers and local goods traffic. A telegraph and postal service should also be another source of revenue, if thrown open at a low charge to the general public. If there is a telegraph office in West Africa, where telegrams can be sent at a reasonable rate, the general public will throw away a lot of money on it in a fiscally fascinating way.

These various sources of revenue will place in the

hands of the Grand Council a sufficient revenue, and if that revenue is expended by them in developing methods of transport, I am confident that the trade of the district, in the hands of the private firms, will healthily expand, alike rapidly and continuously, and thereby supply more revenue, which, expended with equal wisdom, will again increase the trade and prosperity of the region, and make West Africa into a truly great possession.

The things I depend on for the development of West Africa are mainly two. First, the sub-commissioner's town, acting in fellowship with the chiefs' council of the district. The example of that town will stimulate the best of the chiefs to emulation; it will by every self-respecting chief, be regarded as stylish to have clean wide streets and shops, a telegraph and post-office, and things like that. Seeing that his elder brother, the sub-commissioner, has a line of telegraph connecting him with the district commission town, he will want a line of telegraph too. By all means let him have it; let him have the electric light and a telephone, if he feels he wants it, and will pay for it; but don't force these things, let them come in a natural way. The great thing, however, in the sub-commissioner's town is that it should be so ruled and governed that it does not become a thing like our Coast towns now, sink-holes of moral iniquity, which stink in the nose of a respectable African—things he hates to see his sons and daughters and people go down into.

Secondly, I depend on municipal government on the lines I have laid down for the Coast towns. The government of these municipalities would be in the hands of the representatives of the trading firms, and the more important native traders—people, as I hold, perfectly capable of dealing with affairs, and having a community of interests.

The great difficulty in arranging any system for the government of West Africa lies not in the true difficulties this region presents, but in the fictitious difficulties which are the growth of years of mutual

misunderstanding and misrepresentation. That great mass of mutual distrust, so that to-day down there white man distrusts white man and black, black man distrusts black man and white, may seem on a superficial review to be justified. But if you go deeper you will find that this distrust is the mere product of folly and ignorance, and is therefore removable.

The great practical difficulty lies in arranging a system whereby the white trader can work on every legitimate line absolutely free from governmental hindrance. I have too great a respect for the West Coast traders to publish any criticism on them. I hold that the competition among them is too severe for them to face the present state of West Africa and prosper as men should, who run so great a risk of early death as the West Coast trader runs. I should like to know who profits by their internecine war; I think no one but the native buyers of their goods. Again now, under the present Crown Colony system, the traders, knowing they are the people who have paid for the Government for years, who have given it the money it lives on, naturally ask for something back in the way of local improvements. The Government has now no money to carry out these improvements, unless it borrows it. The Government as at present existing must necessarily waste that borrowed money just as it has wasted the money the traders have paid it; therefore the consequences of improvements under the present system must be debt, which the traders must pay in the end. I would therefore urge the traders to abandon a policy of demanding improvements and protection in their trade relationships with the natives, such as ordinances against adulteration of produce, &c., and to realise that by gaining these things they are but enslaving themselves in the future. Let them rather adopt the policy of altering the form of government before they proceed to urge further governmental expenditure.

If the traders require a dry-nurse system, let them formulate one in place of the one sketched above. I do not, however, think they want anything of the kind,

unless they are indeed degenerate; but, if they do, I beg them to bear in mind that you cannot have an Alexandra feeding bottle and a latch key; they must choose one or the other. At present, the Crown Colony system gives neither. Under it the trader is treated like a child, a neglected child, one of those interesting but unfortunate children who have to support an elderly relative, who would be all the better for a cheap funeral.

Upon the missionary and educational side of the system I have advocated I need not enlarge. Just as trade should go on under it free, so should mission effort; there should be no governmental forcing of either, but it should be steadily borne in mind that the regeneration of the considerable amount of broken up stuff which exists in the Coast town regions—the Africans who have lost their old culture and their old Fetish regulation or conduct without being completely Europeanised—is a work that can only be effected by the missionary, and therefore in the hands of the missions should be placed the whole education department, with the one demand on it from the Government that in their schools every scholar should have the opportunity of acquiring a sound education in the rudiments of English reading, writing and arithmetic. Give him this knowledge, and your brilliant young African has demonstrated that he can rise to any examination such as an European university offers him. Under the system I advocate there need be no limitation as to colour in the officials employed in the municipalities. In the sub-commissioners' towns the head officials must be Englishmen, but among the regions under the Landes Hoheit in the hinterland, Africans educated as doctors or as traders could have grand careers provided they did honest work.

The consideration of the African side of this system of administration is a thing into which—after all the long recitation I have inflicted on you concerning African religion and law—I am not justified in plunging here. I will merely, therefore, lay before you a statement of African Common Law, so that you may see the African principle through which the Landes Hoheit

—the government of Africa by Africans—would work. I am confident that the thing—the African principle—is so sound that it could work; there is no need for us to put our Commerce under it, any more than there is need that we should attempt to put the African's private property under our own law; but a healthy Commerce and a healthy Law should co-operate, and can co-operate.

[*To face page* 359.

A Hausa.

CHAPTER XVIII

AFRICAN PROPERTY

Wherein some attempt is made to set down the divers kinds of property that exist among the people of the true Negro race in Western Africa, and the law whereby it is governed.

IN speaking on the subject of African property and the laws which guard it in its native state, I must, in the space at my disposal here, confine myself to speaking of these things as they are in one division of the many different races of human beings that inhabit that vast continent of Africa; and, in order to present the affair more clearly, I must take them as they exist in their most highly developed state, namely, among the people of the true Negro stock, for it is among these people that pure African culture has reached so far its fullest state of development.

The distribution zone of this true Negro stock cannot yet be fixed with any approach to accuracy, but we know that the seaboard of the regions inhabited by the true Negro is that vast stretch of the African West Coast from a point outh of the Gambia River to a point just north of Cameroon River, in the region of the Rio del Rey. We can safely say, within this region you will find the true Negro, but we cannot safely say how far inland, or how far down south of the Rio del Rey we shall find him. That this stock extends through up to the Nile regions; that it stretches far away south of the Nile in

the interior of the Upper Congo regions, appearing in the Azenghi; that it stretches south on the coast line below the Rio del Rey, appearing as the so-called noble tribes of the Bight of Panavia, the Ajumba, Mpongwe, Igalwa, and also as Osheba, Befangh, will be demonstrated I believe when we have a sufficient supply of ethnological observers in Africa. But it must be remembered that you can only get the true Negro unadulterated in the coast regions of Western Africa between the Rivers Gambia and Cameroon.

In the fringe regions of the West Soudan you have an adulterated form of him—adulterated in idea with Mohammedanism, and the Berber races; to the east and to the south with that other great African race division, the Bantu. I venture to think that Bantu adulteration mainly takes the form of language. We have in our own continent many instances of races of greater strength and conquering power adopting the language of the weaker peoples whom they have conquered, when the language has been one more adapted to the needs of life and more widely diffused than their own, and therefore more suited to commercial intercourse.

The Negro languages are poor, and, moreover, they differ among themselves so gravely that one tribe cannot understand another tribe that lives even next door to it. I know 147 such languages in the region of the Niger Delta alone. Now this sort of thing means interpreters, and is hindersome to commercial intercourse, and therefore you always find the true Negro, when he is in a district where he has opportunities of trading with other peoples, adopting their language, and making for use in public life a corrupt English, Portuguese, or Arabic lingo. Similarly, it seems to me, he has in the regions he has conquered in Southern and Central Africa, adopted Bantu, and much the same thing has happened, and is still happening, there, as happened in Southern and Central Europe. Just as the powerful barbarian stocks adopted Latin in a way that must keep Priscian's head still in bandages and to this day seriously mar his happiness in the Elysian fields, so have the true Negroes

adopted the flexible Bantu languages. But it would be as unscientific to regard a Spaniard or a Frenchman as a full-blooded ancient Roman, as to regard many of the Negro tribes now speaking Bantu language as Bantu men.

The Negro has, moreover, not only adopted Bantu languages in some regions, such as the Mpongwe, for example, but he has also adopted to a certain extent Bantu culture. I am sure those of you who have lived among the true Negroes and true Bantu, will agree with me that these cultures differ materially. Africa, so far as I know it, namely, from Sierra Leone to Benguela, smells generally rather strong, but particularly so in those districts inhabited by the true Negro. This pre-eminence the true Negroes attain to by leaving the sanitary matters of villages and towns in the hands of Providence. The Bantu culture looks after the cleaning and tidying of the village streets to a remarkable degree, though by no means more clean in the houses, which, in both cultures, are quite as clean and tidy as you will find in England. Again, in the Bantu culture you will find the slaves living in villages apart: inside the true Negro they live with their owners; and there are other points which mark the domestic cultures of these people as being different from each other, which I need not detain you with now. All these points in Bantu domestic culture the true Negro will adopt, as well as language; but there seem to be two points he does not readily adopt, or rather two points in his own culture to which he clings. One is the religious: in Bantu you find a great female god, who, for practical purposes, is more important than the great male god, in so far as she rules mundane affairs. In the true Negro the great gods are male. There are great female gods, but none of them occupy a position equal to that occupied by Nzambi, as you find the Bantu great female god called among the people who are undoubtedly true Bantu, the Fjort. The other is the form of the State, and one important part of that form is

the institution in the Negro tribes of a regular military organisation, with a regular War Lord, not one and the same with the Peace Lord.

This, I am aware, is not the customary or fashionable view of race distribution in Africa, but allow me to recall to your remembrance one of the most fascinating books ever written, *The Adventures of Andrew Battel, of Leigh in Essex*, who for eighteen years lived among the districts of the Lower Congo.

I do this in order to show that I am not theorising in this matter. Andrew Battel left London on a ship sweetly named *The May Morning*, and having a consort named the *Dolphin*—they were pinnaces of fifty tons each—on the 20th of April, 1589. With very little delay they fell into divers disasters, and Andrew became a prisoner in the hands of the Portuguese at Loanda. He had a very bad time of it, the Portuguese then regarding all Englishmen as pirates and nothing more, except heretics and vermin. Andrew, with the enterprise and common sense of our race, escaped several times from captivity, and with the stupidity of our race fell into it again, but his great escape was when he fell in with the Ghagas. Well, these Ghagas, Andrew Battel and the Portuguese historians say, were a fearful people, who came from behind Sierra Leone, and when the Kingdom of Congo was discovered by Diego Caõ in 1484, the Ghagas were attacking it so severely that, but for the timely arrival of the Portuguese and the help they gave Congo, there would in a very short time have been no Kingdom of Congo left to discover; and to this day Dr. Blyden, who went there on a Government mission, says that up by Fallaba, in the Sierra Leone hinterland, you will now and then see a Ghaga—a man feared, a man of whom the country people do not know where his home is, nor what he eats or how he lives, but from whom they shrink as from a superior terrible form of human being—a remnant, or remainder over, of those people whose very name struck terror throughout Central Equatorial Africa in the 15th

House Property at Kathoma.

To face page 362.

Bubis of Fernando Po.

century, when, for some reason we do not know, they made a warlike migration down among the peaceful feeble Bantu.

If you will carefully study the account given of the organisation of the Ghagas and also of the organisation of the Kingdom of Congo, I think you will see that in the Ghagas you have a true Negro State form, while in the Congo Kingdom you have something different; something that is nowadays called Bantu. What became of the Ghagas when foiled by the Portuguese in destroying the Kingdom of Congo is not exactly known, but there is a definite ground for thinking that, modified by intermarriage and a different environment, they split up, and are now represented by the warlike South African tribes and East African tribes, such as the Matabele, and the Massai, and so on. The modification of this portion of the true Negro stem in the south and the east is akin to the modification the stem has undergone nearer to its true home on the West Coast of Africa, where to the north of Sierra Leone and behind the coast regions of the Ivory, Gold, and Slave Coasts it has, by admixture with the Berber tribes of the Western Soudan, produced the Black Moors, namely the Mandingo, the Hausa, and Oullaf. These Black Moors of the Western Soudan have attained to a high pitch of barbaric culture; it appears to be a further development of the true Negro culture, but it is so suffused with the Mohammedan idea and law that it is not in this state that we can best study the native culture of the pure Negro. Neither can we study it well in those south and east regions where it has adopted Bantu language and culture to a certain extent.

I will not, however, attempt to enter here upon the question of the continental distribution of the Negro and Bantu stocks; I will merely beg observers of African tribes to note carefully whether their tribe is given to street-cleaning, to keeping slaves in separate villages, or to venerating a great female god. If it is, it has got a Bantu culture; if, in addition, it has a regular military organisation, or a keen commercial spirit, or a certain ability to rule over the tribes round it, I beg

they will suspect Negro blood and do their best to give us that tribe's migration history; and then we may in future times be able to settle the question of race distribution on better lines than our present state of knowledge allows of. Having said that the law and institutions of the true Negro stock cannot best be studied in those regions where they are adulterated by alien cultures, it remains to say where they can best be studied. I think that undoubtedly this region is that of the Oil Rivers.

The thing you must always bear in mind when observing institutions and so on from Sierra Leone down to Lagos, is that the fertile belt between the salt sea of the Bight of Benin and the sand sea of Sahara is but a narrow band of forest and fertile country, while, when you get below Lagos—Lagos itself is a tongue of the Western Soudan coming down to the sea—you are in the true heart of Africa, the Equatorial Forest Belt; and that it is in this belt that you will get your materials at their purest. Therefore take the regions inhabited by the true Negro. In the regions from Sierra Leone to the Gold Coast, you have, it is true, not much white influence or adulteration, mainly because of the rock-reefed shore being dangerous to navigators. There is in this region undoubtedly a great and yearly increasing so-called Arab, but really Mohammedanised Berber, influence working on the true Negro. The natives themselves have their State-form in a state of wreckage from the destruction of the old Empire of Meli, which fell, from reasons we do not know, some time in the 16th century. We have, however, miserably little information on this particular region of Sierra Leone, the Pepper and Ivory Coasts, owing to its never having been worked at by a competent ethnologist; but the accounts we have of it show that the secret societies have here got the upper hand to an abnormal extent for the Negro state. Then we come to the Gold Coast region which has been so excellently worked at by the late Sir A. B. Ellis. Here you have a heavy amount of adulteration in idea, and, moreover, the long-continued white

influence —1435–1898—has decidedly tended to a disorganisation of the Negro State-form, and to an undue development of the individual chief; nevertheless the law-form now existent on the Gold Coast is, when tested against a knowledge of the pure Negro law-form as found in the Oil Rivers, almost unaltered, and I think if you will carefully study that valuable book, Sarbar's *Fanti Customary Law*, you will also see that the State-form is identical in essence with that of the Oil Rivers—the House system.

The House is a collection of individuals; I should hesitate to call it a developed family. I cannot say it is a collection of human beings, because the very dogs and canoes and so on that belong to it are part of it in the eye of the law, and capable therefore alike of embroiling it and advancing its interests. These Houses are bound together into groups by the Long ju-ju proper to the so-called secret society, common to the groups of houses. The House itself is presided over by what is called, in white parlance, a king, and beneath him there are four classes of human beings in regular rank, that is to say, influence in council: firstly, the free relations of the king, if he be a free man himself, which is frequently not the case; if he be a slave, the free people of the family he is trustee for; secondly, the free small people who have placed themselves under the protection of the House, rendering it in return for the assistance and protection it affords them service on demand; the third and fourth classes are true slave classes, the higher one in rank being that called the Winnaboes or Trade boys, the lower the pull-away boys and the plantation hands.[1] The best point in it, as a system, is that it gives to the poorest boy who paddles an oil canoe a chance of becoming a king.

Property itself in West Africa, and as I have reason to believe from reports in other parts of tropical Africa that I am acquainted with, is firmly governed and is

[1] See "Lecture on African Religion and Law," published by leave of the Hibbert Trustees in the *National Review*, and now reprinted at p. 395 below.

divisible into three kinds. Firstly, ancestral property connected with the office of headmanship, the Stool, as this office is called in the true Negro state, the Cap, as it is called down in Bas Congo; secondly, family property, in which every member of the family has a certain share, and on which he, she, or it has a claim; thirdly, private property, that which is acquired or made by a man or woman by their personal exertions, over and above that which is earned by them in co-operation with other members of their family which becomes family property, and that which is gained by gifts or made in trade by the exercise of a superior trading ability.

Every one of these forms of property is equally sacred in the eye of the African law. The property of the Stool must be worked for the Stool; working it well, increasing it, adds to the importance of the Stool, and makes the king who does so popular; but he is trustee, not owner, of the Stool property, and his family don't come in for that property on his death, for every profit made by the working of Stool property is like this itself the property of the Stool, and during the king's life he cannot legally alienate it for his own personal advantage, but can only administer it for the benefit of the Stool.

The king's power over the property of the family and the private property of the people under his rule, consists in the right of Ban, but not arrière Ban. Family property is much the same as regards the laws concerning it as Stool property. The head of the family is the trustee of it. If he is a spendthrift, or unlucky in its management he is removed from his position. Any profit he may make with the assistance of a member of his own family becomes family property; but of course any profit he may make with the assistance of his free wives or wife, a person who does not belong to his family, or with the assistance of an outsider, may become his own. Private property acquired in the ways I have mentioned is equally sacred in the eyes of the law. I do not suppose you could find a single human being, slave or free, who had not some private property of his or her very own. Amongst that very interesting

and valuable tribe, the Kru, where the family organisation is at its strictest, you can see the anxiety of the individual Kruman to secure for himself a little portion of his hard-earned wages and save it from the hands of his family elders. The Kruman's wages are paid to him in, or changed by him, into cloths and sundry merchandise, and he is not paid off until the end of his term of work. So he has to hurry up in order to appropriate to himself as much as he can on the boat that takes him back to his beloved "We" country, and industriously make for himself garments out of as much of his cotton goods as he can; for even a man's family, even in Kru country, will not take away his shirt and trousers, but I am afraid there is precious little else that the Kruman can save from their rapacity. What he can save in addition to these, he informs me, he gives to his mother, or failing his mother, to a favourite sister, who looks after it and keeps it for him, she being, woman-like, more fit to quarrel if need be with the family elders than he is himself. But all private property once secured is sacred, very sacred, in the African State-form. I do not know from my own investigations, nor have I been able to find evidence in the investigations of other observers, of any king, priesthood, or man, who would openly dare interfere with the private property of the veriest slave in his district, diocese, or household. I know this seems a risky thing to say, and I do not like to say it because I feel that if I were a betting man I could make a good thing over betting on it, for experience has taught me that every time an African's property is taken by a fellow African under native law, and in times of peace, it is taken after it is confiscated by its original owner, either in bankruptcy or crime. You will hear dozens of accounts of how everything an African possessed was seized on, &c., but if you look into them you will find in every case that the individual so cleaned out owed it all, and frequently far more, before he or she fell into the hands of the Official Receiver, the local chief.

One of the most common causes of an individual's entire estate being seized upon is a conviction for

witchcraft. Every form of property in Africa is liable to be called on to meet its owner's debts, and the witch's is too heavy a debt for any individual's private estate to meet and leave a surplus. For not only does the witch owe to the family of the person, of whose murder he or she is convicted, the price of that life, but it is felt by the Community that the witch has not been found out in the first offence, and so every miscellaneous affliction that has recently happened is put down to the convicted witch's account. Mind you, I do not say *all* these claims are *satisfied* out of the estate of the witch deceased, (witches are always deceased by the authorities with the utmost despatch after conviction) because the said property has during the course of the trial got into the hands of Officialdom and has a natural tendency to stop there. But one thing is certain, there is no residuary estate for the witch's own relations. Not that for the matter of that they would dare claim it in any case, lest they should be involved with the witch and accused as accomplices.

Still, legally, the witch's relations have the consolation of knowing that, if things go smoothly and they evade being accused of a share in the crime, they cannot be called on to meet the debts incurred by the witch. From a family point of view better a dead witch than a live speculative trader.

The reason of this delicate little point of law I confess gave me more trouble to discover than it ought to have done, for the explanation was quite simple, namely, the witch's body had been taken over by the creditors.

Now, according to African law, if you take a man's life, or, for the matter of that, his body, dead or alive, in settlement of a debt, your claim is satisfied. You have got legal tender for it. I remember coming across an amusing demonstration of this law in the colony of Cameroon. There was, and still is, a windy-headed native trader there who for years has hung by the hair of loans over the abyss of bankruptcy. All the local native traders knew that man, but there arrived a new trader across from Calabar district who did not. Like the

needle to the pole, our friend turned to him for a loan in goods and got it, with the usual result namely, excuses, delays, promises—in fact anything but payment; enraged at this, and determined to show the Cameroon traders at large how to carry on business on modern lines, the young Calabar trader called in the Government and the debtor was gently but firmly confined to the Government grounds. Of course he was not put in the chain-gang, not being a serious criminal, but provided with a palm-mat broom he proceeded to do as little as possible with it, and lead a contented, cheerful existence.

It rather worried the Calabar man to see this, and also that his drastic measure caused no wild rush to him of remonstrating relations of the imprisoned debtor; indeed they did not even turn up to supply the said debtor with food, let alone attempt to buy him off by discharging his debt. In place of them, however, one by one the Cameroon traders came to call on the Calabar merchant, all in an exceedingly amiable state of mind and very civil. They said it gave them pleasure to observe his brisk method of dealing with that man, and it was a great relief to their minds to see a reliable man of wealth like himself taking charge of that debtor's affairs, for now they saw the chance of seeing the money they had years ago advanced, and of which they had not, so far, seen a fraction back, neither capital nor interest. The Calabar man grew pale and anxious as the accounts of the debts he had made himself responsible for came in, and he knew that if the debtor died on his hands, that is to say in the imprisonment he had consigned him to, he would be obliged to pay back all those debts of the Cameroon man, for the German Government have an intelligent knowledge of native law and carry it out in Cameroon. Still the Calabar man did not like climbing down and letting the man go, so he supplied him with food and worried about his state of health severely. This that villainous Cameroon fellow found out, and was therefore forthwith smitten with an obscure abdominal complaint, a fairly safe thing to have as my esteemed friend Dr.

Plehn was absent from that station, and therefore not able to descend on the malingerer with nauseous drugs. It is needless to say that at this juncture the Calabar man gave in, and let the prisoner out, freeing himself thereby from responsibility beyond his own loss, but returning a poorer and a wiser man to his own markets, and more assured than ever of the villainy of the whole Dualla tribe.

In any case legally the relatives of a debtor seized or pawned can redeem, if they choose, the person or the body by paying off the debt with the interest, 33⅓ per cent. per annum, to the common rate. Great sacrifices and exertions are made by his family to redeem almost every debtor, and the family property is strained to its utmost on his or her behalf; but in the case of a witch it is different, no set of relatives wish to redeem a convicted witch, who, reduced by the authorities to a body, and that mostly in bits and badly damaged, is not a thing desirable. No! they say Society has got him and we are morally certain he must have been illegitimate, for such a thing as a witch never happened in our family before, and if we show the least interest in the remains we shall get accused ourselves. Of course if a man or woman's life is taken on any other kind of accusation save witchcraft, the affair is on a different footing. The family then forms a higher estimate of the deceased's value than they showed signs of to him or her when living, and they try to screw that value to the uttermost farthing out of the person who has killed their kinsman. Society at large only regards you for doing this as a fool man to think so highly of the departed, whose true value it knows to be far below that set on him. In the case of a living man taken for debt, he is a slave to his creditor, a pawn slave, but not on the same footing as a boughten slave; he has not the advantages of a true slave in the matter of succeeding to the wealth or position of the house, but against that he can be a free man the moment his debts are paid. This may be a theoretical possibility only, just as it would be theoretical for me to expect my family to bail me out if the bail were a question of a

million sterling, but in legal principle the redemption is practicable.

In the case of taking a dead body another factor is introduced. By taking charge of and interring a body, you become the executor to the deceased man's estate. I have known three sets of relatives arrive with three coffins for one body, and a consequential row, for a good deal can be made by an executor; but if you make yourself liable for the body's liabilities care is needed, and there is no reckless buying of bodies with whose private affairs you are not conversant, in West Africa. It is far too wild a speculation for such quiet commercial men as my African friends are. Hence it comes that a Negro merchant on a trading tour away from his home, overtaken by death in a town where he is not known, is not buried, but dried and carefully put outside the town, or on the road to the market, the road he came by, so that any one of his friends or relations, who may perchance come some time that way, can recognise the remains. If they do they can take the remains home and bury them if they like, or bury them there, free and welcome, but the local County Council will do nothing of the kind. A nice thing a set of respectable elders, or as their Fanti name goes Paynim, would let themselves in for by burying the body of a gentleman who happened to have four murders, ten adultery cases, a crushing mass of debt, and no earthly assets save a few dilapidated women, bad ones at that, and a whole pack of children with the Kraw Kraw, or the Guinea worm, or both together and including the Yaws.

This brings us to another way besides witchcraft whereby a gentleman in West Africa can throw away a fine fortune by paying his debts, namely, the so-called adultery. Adultery out there, I hastily beg to remark, may be only brushing against a woman in a crowded market place or bush path, or raising a hand in defence against a virago. It's the wrong word, but the customary one to use for touching women, and it is exceedingly expensive and a constant source of danger to the most

respectable of men, the demands made on its account being exorbitant: sometimes so exorbitant that I have known of several men who, in order to save their family from ruin—for if their own private property were insufficient to meet it the family property would be liable for the balance—have given themselves up as pawn-slaves to their accusers.

There is but one check on this evil of frivolous and false accusation, and that is that when there have been many cases of it in a district, the cult of the Law God of that region gets a high moral fit on and comes down on that district and eats the adultery. I need not say that this is to the private benefit of no layman in the district, for notoriously it is an expensive thing to have the Law God down, and a thing every district tries to avoid. There is undoubtedly great evil in this law, which presses harder on private and family property than anything else, harder even than accusations of witchcraft; but it safeguards the women, enabling them to go to and fro about the forest paths, and in the villages and market places at home, and far from home, without fear of molestation or insult, bar that which they get up amongst themselves.

The methods employed in enforcing the payment of a debt are appeal to the village headman or village elders; or, after due warning, the seizure of property belonging to the debtor if possible, or if not, that of any other person belonging to his village will do. This procedure usually leads to palaver, and the elders decide whether the amount seized is equal to the debt or whether it is excessive; if excessive the excess has to be returned, and there is also the appeal to the Law Society. In the regions of the Benin Bight we have further, as in India, the custom of collecting debts by Dharna. In West Africa the creditor who sits at the debtor's door is bound to bring with him food for one day, this is equivalent to giving notice; after the first day the debtor has to supply him with food, for were he to die he would be answerable for his life and the worth thereof in addition to the original debt. If I mention that

there is no community of goods between a man and his wife (women owning and holding property under identical conditions to men in the eye of the law), I think I shall have detained you more than long enough on the subject of the laws of property in West Africa. You will see that the thing that underlies them is the conception that every person is the member of some family, and all the other members of the family are responsible for him and to him and he to them; and every family is a member of some house, and all the other members of the house are responsible for and to the families of which it is composed.

The natural tendency of this is for property to become joint property, family property, or to be absorbed into family property. A man by his superior ability acquires, it may be, a considerable amount of private property, but at his death it passes into the hands of the family. There are Wills, but they are not the rule, and they more often refer to an appointment of a successor in position than to a disposal of effects. The common practice of gifts there supplies the place of Wills with us; a rich man gives his friend or his favourite wife, child, or slave, things during his life, while he can see that they get it, and does not leave the matter till after his death. The good point about the African system is that it leaves no person uncared for; there are no unemployed starving poor, every individual is responsible for and to his fellow men and women who belong to the same community, and the naturally strong instinct of hospitality, joined with the knowledge that the stranger within the gates belongs to a whole set of people who will make palaver if anything happens to him, looks well after the safety of wanderers in Negro land. The bad point is, of course, that the system is cumbersome, and, moreover, it tends, with the operation of the general African law of *mutterrecht*, the tracing of descent through females, to prevent the building up of great families. For example, you have a great man, wise, learned, just, and so on; he is esteemed in his generation, but at his death his property does not go to the

sons born to him by one of his wives, who is a great woman of a princely line, but to the eldest son of his sister by the same mother as his own. This sister's mother and his own mother was a slave wife of his father's; this, you see, keeps good blood in a continual state of dilution with slave blood. The son he has by his aristocratic wife may come in for the property of her brother, but her brother belongs to a different family, so he does not take up his father's greatness and carry it on with the help his father's wealth could give him in the father's family. I do not say the system is unjust or anything like that, mind; I merely say that it does not tend to the production of a series of great men in one family.

Nevertheless, when once you have mastered the simple fundamental rules that underlie the native African idea of property they must strike you as just, elaborately just; and there is another element of simplicity in the thing, and that is that all forms of property are subject to the same law, land, women, china basons, canoes, slaves, it matters not what, there is the law.

You will often hear of the vast stretches of country in Africa unowned, and open to all who choose to cultivate them or possess them. Well, those stretches of unowned land are not in West Africa. I do not pretend to know other parts of the continent. In West Africa there is not one acre of land that does not belong to some one, who is trustee of it, for a set of people who are themselves only life tenants, the real owner being the tribe in its past, present, and future state, away into eternity at both ends. But as West African land is a thing I should not feel, even if I had the money, anxious to acquire as freehold, and as you can get under native law a safe possession of mining and cultivation rights from the representatives living of the tribe they belong to, I do not think that any interference is urgently needed with a system fundamentally just.

After having said so much on African native property, it may be as well to say what African property consists of. It is not necessary for me to go into the affair very

fully, but you will remember, I am sure, the old statement of "women and slaves constitute the wealth of an African." The African himself would tell you nine times in ten that women and slaves caused him the lack of it. Still they are undoubtedly a factor in the true Negro's wealth, but to consider them property it is necessary to consider them as property in different classes. Here and now I need only divide them into two classes—wives properly so-called, and male and female slaves. The duty of the slave is to increase directly the wealth of his or her owner—that of the wife to increase it also, but in a different manner, namely, by bringing her influence to bear for his advantage among her own family and among the people of the district she lives in. A big chief will have three or more of these wives, each of them living in her own house, or in the culture state of Calabar, in her own yard in his house, having her own farm away in the country, where she goes at planting and harvest times. She possesses her own slaves and miscellaneous property, which includes her children, and the main part of this property is really the property of her family, just as most people's property is in West Africa. The husband will reside with each of these wives in turn, yet he has a home of his own, with his slave wives, and his children properly so called, similarly having his own farm and miscellaneous property, which again belongs mainly to his family, and this house is usually presided over by his mother, or failing her a favourite sister.

The immediate rule of a husband over his wife may be likened to that of a constitutional monarch, that of a man or woman over a slave to that of an absolute monarch, though true absolutism is in the Negro State-form not to be found in any individual man. The nearest approach to it is, very properly, in the hands of the cult of the Law God, the tribal secret society, but even from that society the individual can appeal, if he dare, to Long Ju Ju.

The other forms of wealth possessed by an African his true wealth, are market rights, utensils, canoes, arms,

furniture, land, and trade goods. It is in his capacity to command these things in large quantities that his wealth lies, it is his wives and slaves who enable and assist him to do this thing. So take the whole together and you will see how you can have a very rich African, rich in the only way it is worth while being rich in, power, yet a man who possibly could not pay you down £20, but a real millionaire for all that.

CHAPTER XIX

WEST AFRICAN PROPERTY[1]

I HAD once the interesting experience of seeing a West African chief come in to pay a fine that had been laid on his district in consequence of its having killed and eaten three native Communicants of a Roman Catholic Mission on their way to their homes. The payment of that fine consisted of a hundred balls of indiarubber, six teeth (elephant tusks), four bundles of pissava fibre, three Odeaka cheeses, a canoe, a collection of iron swords, two English china basins, ten billets of ebony, a canoe load of cam wood mixed with billets of bar wood as an adulteration, and five ladies in rather bad repair. My friend the official, who was new to West Africa, said: "Would you come, Miss Kingsley, and look at the museum that has just arrived?" On observing it I remarked: "My dear sir, this is the payment of the fine; it's good value and quite correct." "That's what they say," he replied, "and, my dear madam, I can understand it up to a certain point, but———" "Well, what point?" I inquired. "Those ladies," he replied. "They are quite correct," I said. "Correct?" he ejaculated. I hastily added, "From a scientific point of view."

He said something about ladies in that state of dilapidation being possibly correct enough, but still undesirable

[1] Reprinted by permission from the *Morning Post*, July, 1898.

as far as he personally was concerned. So I advised him to, what we call in the trade language of that locality, "room the bundle" and get ivory in lieu of the ladies and the small stuff—the curios—as he flippantly called the swords and cheeses; and he gladly acted on the suggestion. I was called in later on, however, because this official, doubtless from the natural gallantry of his nation, put a far higher equivalent value on the ladies than the local view, which was their true worth. Now I have the honour of speaking to you of property in a state of society where such collections of articles as those aforesaid are legal tender, where each article is known to have a definite value, and where you can—if it pleases you—change any one of them for an article of equivalent value or for several articles that make up that value, where you can change a lady into so many iron axe-heads or so many balls of rubber or elephant teeth, or *vice versâ*.

I venture to think that the consideration of the nature of property in this African state of society is worthy of your close and earnest attention—for at present the whole of Tropical Africa is one seething mass of discontent and hidden and open rebellion against European rule, entirely because European rule collides with the native African view of the Principles of Property. Unfortunately this subject of property in Africa has not been one that has received of late years much attention, and, therefore, I have but little modern support for the dicta I must lay down. The period of the past thirty years has been one of great enterprise and heroic endeavour directed towards the solution of the geographical problems of Africa, the fixing of the points of latitude and longitude, the courses of rivers and the situation of lakes, &c., a very noble and necessary work. Not to the blame of the famous African travellers, but nevertheless unfortunately, European Governments have also during this period endeavoured, with great enterprise and heroism, to superimpose their actual control on the African populations. Had this endeavour been made by the European States in the

seventeenth century there is but little doubt it could have been carried through successfully, because the seventeenth century had in its possession an enormous mass of knowledge—sound knowledge—regarding the conditions of the African. This information has now naturally enough passed out of memory of the European States, no state having apparently a memory that can go back even fifty years, and, therefore, Africa is being dealt with on lines based on the work of those great geographers of recent times whose mighty deeds are fascinating to us all.

But still, we, who study the African more than we study the geography of his country, are an old tribe. So far as we know, our primal ancestor is Herodotus. The next great chief I need mention now is John Leo, a Moor born in Granada about 1494, and brought up in Barbarie; to him follow that flush of our great chiefs, Sieur Brue, Bosman, Merolla de Sorrento, Barbot, and many others in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries; and then comes El Haji Abd Salaam, Shabeeny, and in our own time such men as Bastian, Buckholtz, Hübbe Schleiden, Callaway, and Sir A. B. Ellis. Therefore I beg to hope that we—if I may in all humbleness class myself with such a man as John Leo, commonly called Leo Africanus—are still a strong tribe that may look forward to great chiefs yet to come. Yet I am bound to own we have not done much good. It was indeed our tribe that made the trade of Europe with Africa possible, for you cannot trade without a knowledge of the ways of your customers. It remains to be seen whether you can govern without a knowledge of the nature of those for whom you legislate. The attempt is now being energetically carried on in Africa; meanwhile we, who are not explorers of Africa—because we never exactly know where we go, and we never exactly care—give a certain amount of interesting information to the builders of that modern science, Comparative Ethnology; but we are not comparative ethnologists ourselves, and therefore I respectfully beg you to allow me to consider this question of African

property, not from a comparative ethnological standpoint, but from one more natural to my tribe.

Plato says that property is the basis of the State, but Aristotle, as you will remember, traverses this statement, and regards it merely as one of the things indispensable to a State, and gives his masterly enumeration of the functions of the State to bear out his view. These functions are: First, there must be food; second, arts of life require many instruments; third, there must be arms, for the members of the community have need of them in order to maintain authority both against disobedient subjects and against external assailments; fourth, there must be a certain amount of revenue, both for internal needs and purposes of war; fifthly (or rather firstly), there must be a care of religion, what is commonly called worship; sixth (and most necessary of all, says Aristotle), there must be a power of deciding what is for the public interest and what is just in men's dealings with one another. These are the things which every State may be said to need; for a State is not a mere aggregate of persons, but a union of them sufficing for the purposes of life, and if any of these things were wanting it is simply impossible that a community can be self-sufficing. A State, then, should be framed with a view to the fulfilment of these functions. Now the people of Africa that I have personally studied, those from Sierra Leone to Angola, below the Congo, live in a form of society possessing all these functions of the State of Aristotle; therefore I venture to apply to the African form of society Aristotle's word State. I do not mean to say that Aristotle would approve of the mechanism of the African State, but he would recognise it as a State and understand it, and see whereby it could be improved, and I can certainly say that all of Aristotle's views that I have propounded to the Africans—suitably translated into trade English or native words—have always been accepted by them as good and sound views—views, indeed, singularly, weirdly sensible for a white man to possess. Plato's opinions, on the other hand, I soon abandoned. They

only got me into discredit as a visionary at the best; and as for "the Republic," with its ideas about community of goods and ladies, well, if I had gone about preaching that propaganda things would have happened to me that would have prevented me detaining you here now; but Aristotle is always good law.

I can assure you that no book on Ethnology can give you so true a view of the essence of West African State thought as that glorious manifestation of human wisdom—the Politics of Aristotle. Such being the case, I now turn to the consideration of those functions of a State to show you that functions it is now my business to speak to you about, and I find, to our mutual regret, there is not one function of the State, not even religion itself, that in the African State is disconnected entirely with property. I am not sure whether this might not be said even of European States—for property to all men is much what matter is to spirit—a thing whereby work can be done. In this work, if you will allow me to use the simile of the steam engine, I may say property is the steam, and then you will see that steam is the instrument which the truly great man, black, white or yellow, uses to obtain his ends; it is not the great man himself. So Letonneau is right when he says: "Property is the great social mainspring," and there is no great political revolution but is co-related with some modification of the right of property; no metamorphosis of this right which does not bring with it a political transformation, and, above all, Aristotle is, as usual, right, and I think none of us who read him can help thinking that if ever a great man was wasted on wooden-headed humanity it was the "Stagyrite," as Mr. Gibbon calls him.

Having stated that the form of Society under which the natives of Western Africa live is a form of Society to which the term State must be applied, because it satisfies all the essential functions of the State required by Aristotle, I must proceed briefly to describe the nature of the West African State. Now there is a good deal of the West Coast of Africa. You cannot—as an eminent

friend of mine was requested by his Mission Society to do—preach in the Gambia at morning service and conduct evening service on the Gold Coast. At least, you cannot do so until science has gone ahead a bit more, and enabled us to telegraph a man whole. And also there are a good many different kinds of West African natives. The writers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries used to divide up "the natives of Afrik" into four sections—the White Moors, the Tawny Moors, the Black Moors (whence our old word Blackeymoor), and the Negroes. We have nowadays to add two more divisions, at any rate—the Bantu and the Pigmy. But as far as it went, the fifteenth century division was quite correct. But Great Britain has only to deal in West Africa with the Black Moor and the true Negro. She has only just a dash of Tawny Moor in the Upper Niger. France has the balance of them, and they are just exactly the right sort of people for an excitable and energetic sort of man like my French friend to tackle. The Black Moor and the true Negro ought by nature to get on well with my fellow countrymen, they being common-sense, commercial sort of people—*Mollusces*, as the French call them, in contra-distinction to the *Microbe*, tawny varieties.

I will not now go into the State form of the Tawny Moors, the Bantu, or the Pigmy, as Great Britain has no interest in them in West Africa, but will confine myself to the True Negro. The Black Moor, in whom she has a painful interest just now to the north of Sierra Leone Colony, and with whom she has had frequent rows to the north of the Gold Coast, is in the arms of Islam, and largely influenced by Mohammedan law. His State form, however, is primarily identical with that of the True Negro. The True Negro State form is one of considerable interest to the student of early law. When I selected Western Africa as the best schoolroom to study this interesting subject in, I spent some time in finding out in which district the primal Negro law and State form could be found in its most unaltered state of full development, and found it was in

the Oil Rivers, a much maligned spot as regards beauty and even health, compared with other West African regions. The True Negro, as you know, lives in those lands from just south of Gambia to Cameroons River, extending within the land as far as dense forest goes and no further, because those Tawny *Microbes* make the semi-desert, open country of the Western Soudan unhealthy for a quiet commercial man. The Black Moor can hold his own on the northern edge of the forest, but it is cheerful work for him, and he has to fall back into dense forest every now and again to rest, just keeping his hand in by stirring up the True Negro as his ex-Majesty of Ashanti and Samory did.

We will just bear these general politics in mind, and then proceed to observe the True Negro State at its fullest condition of development in the Oil Rivers. This State I know is best termed a limited monarchy, though a republic with a slave class is almost equally a correct name for it. For many of the so-called kings of these countries are by no manner of means kings over the districts we credit them with; they are but heads of their own houses, and for the rest, have but that authority over their neighbours that their wealth and reputation for wisdom and justice give them. This authority has in many cases led the other big men of a district to leave the direction of trade matters with Europeans in the hands of one house-chief. Still, the State power of the district—the issuing of general laws, the punishment of sin (not crime: that falls into the hands of the house-chief in whose house it is committed)—is in the hands of the Cult of the Law God, the so-called tribal Secret Society. This state of things produces a certain, what one might call, complexity in politics, and I think an excellent preparation for its study is a consideration of the Italian States from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. For you have in West Africa the same varying interests, jostling each other; and behind them, binding them in a way together, liable to pounce in on their affairs, a power that must never be forgotten, a power that the meanest

citizen, man or women, can any hour of the day or night call in to crush the proudest.

This power, which is undoubtedly the upholder of Justice, is the Cult of the Law God—Purroh, Oru, Egbo, Idione, call it what you will. For example, a person with a grievance in a district under Egbo has only to rush into the street, look out for a gentleman connected with the Egbo Society, slap him on the waistcoat place, and that gentleman has then and there at once to drop any private affair of his own he may be engaged in, call together the Grade of Egbo he belongs to—there are eleven grades of varying power—and go into the case. Or, if an Egbo gentleman is not immediately get-at-able, the complainant has only to rush to the Egbo House—there is one in every town—and beat the Egbo drum, and out comes the Egbo Grade, who have charge for that day. The great Law God Cult is, like all others of its kind, in the hands only of free men, with an affiliated Society of free women. But there is on diplomatic terms with it, wherever there is a great slave population, a Slave Law Society. This Society, like the Women's Society, is well under the Free Men's Society, but if there is a wholesale ill treatment of slaves it rises up and slaughters free citizens, though this is a very rare occurrence. The powerful citizen in this state of society makes it unhealthy for any inferior to call out the Law God—therefore it is only done in desperation, the inferior Grades mainly depending on private enterprise, working on the goodwill of their owner or husband, or on that of his friend or favourite wife.

I have had to detain you on this Tribal Secret Society, because there seems to be a tendency to consider it identical with the Leopard and other murder societies, which it is not. You might just as well, for example, regard the Woolsack as an institution identical with a gang of burglars as regard Purroh and Kufong, or, as it is more commonly but erroneously called, Fangaree, as identical institutions. Or, again, it is just as wrong to confound the Law God Cult with the Fetish Priests serving Sag Tando, as to regard the Woolsack as iden-

tical with the Bench of Bishops. These various classes of Societies in Western Africa, just like classes at home, are on anything but excellent terms with one another. The interaction of these Societies and of the States under them go to the making of general internal politics throughout the true Negro Region. For the perfect form, as I have already explained in the previous chapter, you must go to the Oil Rivers. In the Sierra Leone Northern region it is knocked about a good deal by Islam. In the Sierra Leone Southern region the Secret Societies of all sorts seem to have got the upper hand too much, but neither of these districts has been observed by a competent ethnologist. On the Gold Coast the long-continued (1435–1900) European influence has mainly tended to disorganisation of the Native State form and an undue growth of the power of the individual Chief, and the distinction of his power. But if you carefully study the valuable works of Sir A. B. Ellis, Bastian, and Buchholtz, and Mr. Sarbah's *Fanti Customary Law*, recently published, I think you will see that the primal State form is that which exists in the Oil Rivers, namely, the House system. This system I have already described in previous chapters, and again on p. 398, but a most elaborate and accurate account of it is given in M. le Comte de Cardi's appendix to the first edition of these *West African Studies*.

Having now attempted to sketch the typical form of the True Negro State, I pass on to a brief outline of the condition in which property exists in such a State. Property there is firmly governed, as far as my own knowledge goes, and as far as extensive reading of the works of explorers in Central and East Africa enables me to judge, by the same set of ideas, and is divisible into three kinds: 1. Ancestral property connected with the office of Headmanship, the Stool as the true Negroes call it, the Cap as it is called in the wreckage of the Kingdom of Kongo. 2. Family property in which every member of the family has a certain share. 3. Private property—that which is acquired or made by a man or woman's own personal exertion, that

gained by gifts, and that made in trade by the exercise of superior ability. Every one of these forms of property is equally sacred in the eyes of the African Law.

The property of the Stool must be worked for the Stool. Working it well, adding to it, increases the importance of the Stool and makes the King who occupies it popular, but every profit made on it belongs, like itself, to the Stool. No individual King or occupier of the Headmanship can alienate that property for his personal advantage—hence comes one of the reasons why it does not matter much whether it be free man or slave who is King. The same holds good for family property. As for private property, which is the *Urstuff* —as the Germans would call it—out of which other forms of property spring, that is no less legally sacred in the African State. I do not know from my own investigations, nor from any information I have gleaned, any King, Priesthood, or man who would openly be able to interfere with the private property of the veriest slave in his district, or diocese, or household. This may seem a risky thing to say, but it is not; and I feel I could make quite a little fortune by getting people to bet on it. Such an arrangement is impossible in the columns of the *Morning Post*, however, so I have to sacrifice this golden opportunity and to reveal without pecuniary advantage the secret that when a person's private property is taken during peace, it is always taken under the justification of its being already forfeited. Doubtless I should have had, if I could have arranged that betting transaction, dozens of cases wherein people knew of all kinds and conditions of Africans having everything they possessed cleared out by their fellow citizens or owners; but investigation would have shown that the individual so cleared out had already reduced himself or herself legally to a bankrupt, before he or she fell into the hands of the Official Receiver.

He, or she—the sex is not behindhand in such matters —had been convicted of bewitching somebody, whereby it fell out that his or her estate was forfeited to the State. Every form of property in Africa is liable to be called

on to meet its just debts, and the witch's debt is a heavy one. For not only does the witch owe to the family of the person for whose killing he or she is convicted the price of that life, but it is felt by the community that he or she has not been found out in the first offence: every miscellaneous affliction that has recently happened has been his or her work. Mind you, I do not say these claims are paid out of the estate of the witch deceased—witches are always deceased with the utmost despatch by the authorities after conviction—because the said property has by this time got into the hands of official-dom during the trial, and has a natural tendency to stay there. But one thing is certain about the estate of a witch, and this is that none of it is left for his relatives. Not that they would, for the matter of that, dare to claim it, on account of the fear of being involved with him or her in the accusation of witchcraft. Still, legally, the witch's relatives have the consolation of knowing that—if things go smoothly, and if they evade being accused of complicity in the crime—they cannot be called on to meet the debts incurred by the witch. The reason of this delicate little point, I am ashamed to say, gave me more trouble to find out than was necessary, for the explanation was simple, namely, that the witch's body had been taken over by the creditors.

* * * *

The subject of women is one I habitually avoid except when it concerns dress. Still women cannot be ignored in even the briefest sketch of African property, and you cannot confine yourself to dress when it comes to the ladies of those regions, unless, indeed, you are foolish enough to believe their husbands on the point, a thing which I, as a calm observer, am unable to do, since the outside evidence is dead against the husband's state-ments, that he is a ruined man from the way he weakly, but amiably, gives in to incessant demands on him for costumes, frills, and furbelows. Well, I own I like African women; we have always got on together. True, they have made some spiteful remarks on my

complexion, but I must ignore these in the face of the thousand kindnesses for which I am their debtor.

I remember one late afternoon when, having gone for a walk many hours before and got myself badly lost in the forest, I found myself facing a village clearing, a village which I did not know, but one which I saw from certain signs was at war with the village I had left, and lost. Not that this was any definite geographical help, because for the matter of that pretty near all the villages in the country were—on account, my village said, of their iniquity. However, this particular enemy-village I had arrived at had guarding its gate two warriors, splendid creatures, good six-footers, painted, armed with four spears apiece, and having their hair magnificently plaited into horns—quite the Lords of Creation. I deployed and took bearings, to combine military and marine phraseology, but deciding that there was nothing else for it, came at last cautiously out of the bush, and gave those guardians greeting. They stared at me. "Ndege wa ma yi some" I said again. They turned as one man and fled into the village, I after them through the gateway, intent on reaching a little spot inside where I knew I was safe until I had said my say; and I just caught a back view of those gentlemen going through the door-hole of a house at the further end of the street. Now going through the door-hole of a Fan hut when hurried is not easy as a solo, but as a duet it presents far greater difficulties; and yet they managed it, and in a few moments out of that same door-hole came, not warriors armed with guns and thirsting for blood—gore, I believe, is the fashionable word to use for West Africa—but a quiet old lady. It was evident those warriors had just been "to tell mother." Of course, had I been a dozen men, or an elephant or anything reasonable, they would have laid down their lives in attempting to kill me before disturbing her; but, as I was queer, something they were not accustomed to, they most wisely went to consult her first. There was no cowardice in this, for those men were incapable of cowardice, as I learnt by subsequent experience of them. Indeed they were the

two men whom, when I was once alone with them, I saw do the bravest thing even I have ever seen men do, and the while I wished myself in Dixie they never turned a hair. Still, on my first arrival they referred me to their mother to explain my intentions, and we succeeded in getting things satisfactorily settled. We subsequently got things satisfactorily settled between the two villages, which was better for both of them and for trade, and this and many similar incidents confirmed me in the belief that women have power and position in Africa.

The African woman has also very pretty and engaging manners, as the first one I ever met alone taught me. It was down by Cabenda in the South, and she was a lovely creature on a lonely sandy shore. We cannot write to each other, but I know she thinks of me, and I have her photograph. She was young, beautiful, possessed of a baby and a basket full of fishes, but she was so obviously miserable that it worried me. A survey of the baby assured me that it was all right, another of the fish that they were satisfactory; but still there she was definitely sitting on the sand disconsolate. So seeing she was alone and unharmed, I tried some of the local language that I had been trying to acquire on her: she did not understand it, but gave greeting and kept on looking wretched. This necessitated a re-survey of the situation, which showed me what I ought to have noticed at once, namely, that she was looking at a large crab-hole. Now you cannot catch a large crab without a trap unless there are two of you, so I promptly made for the fringing shore bush and cut a suitable pronged stick, and returned to put my finger carefully into the crab-hole. Had there been a local newspaper, and had she been on the staff and had a telegraph office handy, she would doubtless have rushed away and telegraphed, "Strange case of Intelligence in a White," but these things were not. Consequently I only electrified her personally, and to make a long story short we cheerily and noisily dug that crab out. It was what I believe small boys would term a "whopper," and she caught it as I could not have done, and beamed

radiantly until her better feelings took possession, whereon she reluctantly offered the crab to me. I was far too hot by then to talk strange languages, so I dramatically gave her to understand I did not want it, and the "honour," &c. Still, she insisted on my having a few fish and we parted; but on my apologetically drifting into the local market place next day I was seized on by her and introduced, and the market rang with her account of the affair, and I found in after days that I was welcome in all the villages round, which gave me pleasure and opportunities of improving my education which but for her I should not have had. From these things and many like them I can say nothing against the African woman, but yet it is an undoubted fact that she has imposed on the male explorer, and caused him to give the idea that the African woman is the down-trodden fool of Creation who is treated anyhow.

CHAPTER XX

AFRICAN RELIGION AND LAW[1]

THE inter-relationship between the religion and the law of the natives of West Africa is an exceedingly difficult study, for many reasons, and I feel great diffidence in attempting to explain it in anything under a folio volume. My diffidence does not arise from a sense of any lack of material, nor from any lack of importance in the subject, but from a feeling of personally not being sufficiently powerful to group and arrange the facts concerned so as to present them to you in a concise and coherent form.

The truth is, African Native Law is in much the same condition regarding the knowledge of it in England, as the knowledge of Indian Law was before the time of Sir William Jones. It is a vast unopened treasure-house of knowledge. You have to help you in your study of the subject few forerunners. You have no fellow-students among Englishmen, now that Sir A. B. Ellis, the pioneer in our study of native institutions in West Africa, is no more. You have in Germany, it is true, fellow-students like Prof. Kohler, but even among the Germans, to whom I instinctively turn in difficulty because of the patience and soundness of their work, I find no attempt in this relation to cope with the great underlying principles which it is necessary to understand before you can comprehend the

[1] Lecture given at Oxford, June 4th, 1897, for the Hibbert Trustees, and now published with their consent.

bearings of the details which are afforded by individual cases; I feel in fact the want of authorities of great value like Sir Henry Maine, Sir Alfred Lyall, and Savigny, whose works are bases from which students can advance in the study of the early law of Europe, India, and Rome. There are for the student of African Native Law, as far as I can find, but three printed authorities of value. First come the chapters on Law in the works of Sir A. B. Ellis on the Tschwi, Ewé and Youba, peoples of the Bight of Benin; for the accuracy of his observations I can vouch, from having myself dealt with much of his original material (namely the tribes in question), and I feel that his work must be known by heart by the student of African Law; nevertheless, I am quite unable to agree with Mr. Jevons when he says[1] regarding Fetishism, "that it is certainly amongst the inhabitants of the Gold and Slave Coasts that the subject can best be studied." These Coasts are, I grant, the best place for a student to draw his information from—who is a resident in Europe, and therefore dependent on the accounts given by others of the things with which he is dealing—because of the accuracy and extent of the information he can get from Ellis's works; but apart from Ellis's works, the value of these regions to a student of Native Law and Religion is but of tenth-rate importance, because of the great and long continued infusion of both Mohammedan and European forms of thought that have taken place with the original native form of thought in these regions; owing to the long-continued, if small, thought influence of the white settlements on the Coast of the Bight of Benin and the yet longer continued and more extensive permeation of Mohammedan thought from the Arabised Western Soudan.

Our second authority is Professor Kohler's all too small pamphlet "Uber das Negerrecht."[2] This is founded on German Colonial Jahrbuchs—"Uber die

[1] *Introduction to the History of Religion*, page 164.

[2] *Uber das Negerrecht namentlich in Kamerun.* Prof. Dr. J. Kohler.

Stamme in Kamerun"—which Dr. Kohler has studied and compared most carefully with the accounts of laws and customs given by divers travellers, recent and not recent, who have written on West Africa and other savage regions.

Our third, and in many ways most important document of all, is Mr. Sarbar's volume on "Fanti Customary Law," recently published. It is, however, necessary to remember that this collection of law cases bears only on the law of the Tschwi and Ga-speaking people of the Gold Coast, both of them true Negro, and the true Negro, alike in manners laws and religious dogma, differs considerably from the Bantu. To form a clear conception of native law in West Africa, as a whole, without going out there and studying it yourself, you must compare Mr. Sarbar's cases with the cases cited in the German "Jahrbuchs in Kamerun." This will not give you an extremely accurate idea, for therein, though the cases are collected from a Bantu tribe, yet that tribe—the Dualla—is largely influenced by true Negro customs. For pure Bantu law and pure Negro law there is no printed collection of cases, so I must now venture to fall back on my own personal observations made during my two visits to West Africa, merely stating that I have been down the Coast as far as Loanda and know much of it in detail, and have lived amongst Negro tribes who are in an uncivilised state, behind Calabar and Cameroon, and among Bantu tribes, quite untouched by European or Arab culture, in Congo Française.

The essential thing that you must understand when you attempt to understand any West African native institution is the religion of the native, for this religion has so firm a grasp upon his mind that it influences everything he does. It is not a thing apart, as the religion of the European is at times. The African cannot say, "Oh, that's all right from a religious point of view, but one must be practical." To be practical, to get on in the world, to live the day or night through, he must be right in the religious point of view, namely, he

must be on working terms with the great world of spirits around him. The knowledge of this spirit world constitutes the religion of the African, and his customs and ceremonies arise from his idea of the best way to influence it.

As the term Fetish is that accepted for African religion by ethnologists here, I will use it, but I have elsewhere gone into the subject of the origin of this word and its non-recognition by the Africans.

As to the notion of the conception of the relationship of the spirit-world with earthly affairs held by the African, I find it most clearly set down in these words, the words of one of the greatest philosophers that the world has ever produced, I mean Spinoza. "To say everything happens according to natural laws, and to say that everything is ordained by the decree and ordinance of God is the same thing. Now, since the power in Nature is identical with the power of God, by which alone all things happen and are determined, it follows that whatsoever man, as part of Nature, provides himself with, to aid and preserve his existence, or whatsoever Nature provides him with without his help, is given to him solely by the Divine Power, acting either through human nature or through external circumstance, so whatever human nature can furnish itself with by its own efforts to preserve its existence may be fitly called the inward aid of God, whereas whatever else accrues to man's profit from outward causes may be called the external aid of God."[1] Further on, Spinoza says, "By fortune I mean the ordinance of God so far as it directs human life through external and unexpected means." Herein you can read the religion of the African if you will but change the word God into the word spirits.

To the African the Universe is made up of Matter permeated by Spirit. Everything happens by the action of Spirit. The thing he does himself is done by the spirit within him acting on his body, the matter with which that Spirit is associated; everything that is done

[1] *Tractatus Theologico-politicus.*

by other things is done by their spirit associated with their particular mass of matter; and one of the great fundamental doctrines of Fetish is that the association of one particular spirit with one particular mass of matter is not permanent. The native will point out to you a lightning-stricken tree and tell you its spirit has been killed. He will tell you, when the earthen cooking pot is broken, it has lost its spirit. If his weapon fails him it is because some one has stolen or made its spirit sick by means of his influence on other spirits of the same class—it is a case of witchcraft. In every action of his life he shows you how he lives with a great powerful spirit world around him. You see him before starting out to hunt or fight rubbing stuff into his weapon to strengthen the spirit that is in it; telling it the while what care he has taken of it; running through a list of what he has given it before, though those things had been hard to give; and begging it, in the hour of his dire necessity, not to fail him. "Go not away from me." You see him bending over the face of the river talking to its spirit with proper incantations, asking it when it meets an enemy of his to upset his canoe and destroy him, or to carry down with it, as in the 'Ndok ceremony of the Effeks, the malignant souls of unburied human beings; or, as I have seen myself in Congo Française, to take down with it, away from his village, the pestilence of the spotted death.

How man first gained his belief that there were more actors in the nature drama than he himself is a consideration I will leave to others. But, however this may be, from the view of Nature as made up of Matter influenced by Spirit, I am sure the general idea arose, which you will find in all early forms of culture, that death is the consequence, in most cases, of the action of a malignant spirit. If a man is knocked on the head with a club, or shot by an arrow or bullet, the cause of death is clearly the malignancy of persons using these weapons; and so it is easy to think that a man killed by the falling of a tree, or by the upsetting of a canoe in the surf, or in a whirlpool in the river, is also a victim

of some being using these things as weapons. For a man holding this view it seems to me both natural and easy to regard disease as a manifestation of the wrath of some invisible being, and to construct that intricate system which we find among the Africans and agree to call Witchcraft, Fetish, or Juju. He knows that for a consideration you can get another man to kill or injure a third party, and he thinks that, also for a consideration, you can get one of those non-human beings we call gods or devils, but which the African regards in another light, to do the same.

I soon saw, when I first visited West Africa, from the abundant evidence around me of his belief in this vast spirit-world as influencing the native in his actions and customs (evidence having full confirmation in all books regarding West Africa that we possess), that in order to understand details of the things I saw done, and not done, I must gain a knowledge of the opinion held by the native regarding the spirit-world, and in this matter I owe much to Dr. Nassau, of the American Presbyterian Mission at Gaboon and Batanga, for he possesses an infinitely superior knowledge of the native languages, and his experience of the people dates from 1851—more than forty years of careful, sympathetic work. His opinion is that the spirits whose actions bear directly or indirectly on human affairs may be classified into six classes :—

1. Human disembodied spirits—Manu.

2. Vague beings, well described by our term ghosts—Abambo.

3. Beings something like dryads, who resent intrusion into their territory—Imbuiri.

4. Beings who are agents in causing sickness and either aid or hinder human plans—Mionde.

5. A class allied to the ancient Lares and Penates, who especially belong to the household and descend by inheritance with the family.

6. A class which Dr. Nassau says may, however, be only a function of any of the other classes, namely, those that enter into an animal body, generally into that of a leopard. Sometimes the spirits of human beings can do

this, and the animal thus guided by human intelligence will exercise its strength for the purposes of its temporary human possessors.

Regarding this classification of Dr. Nassau's, I can only say that I think you will find it hold good for all West Africa. You will find other spirits not mentioned in it, but they are those who take no interest in human affairs, so we are not now concerned with them in regard to law, but mainly with the class 4, the Mionde, and the class 5, the family Fetishes; for the Mionde—the spirits who are put into charms, and who are the powers of witches—are a main cause of trouble, and class 5, the family spirits,—the guardians of the family—are the ones we meet with in the law of property.

I fear I have detained you too long on this subject of Fetish, but it is really essential to a comprehending of much of the law itself, and absolutely essential to understanding how the law is enforced in a state of society like that of the native West African—a state of society which possesses no policeman in human form. The spirits are the police force, and I beg you will not think that they are therefore easier to deal with, for they are not. Your human policeman can be evaded or outrun if you steal a few potatoes from a field, but the spirit policeman cannot be so circumvented when he hangs, done up in a bit of rag or put inside a little horn, on guard over an African farm. He will most certainly have you, and you will swell up and "bust."

I must now ask you to turn your attention to the construction of native society in states uninfluenced by European culture. The state of society when European interference comes into it, saying, on the one hand, "We intend to maintain native law," and then proceeding to disregard the important factors of the inheritance through the mother, and the difference between the rights of free men and slaves, is both weird and curious, but not our affair now.

Among the true Negroes of the West Coast of Africa, a so-called system of slavery is the essential basis of society. Among the Bantus of the West Coast it is not

essential from the point of view of law. Do not imagine, however, that I am praising the Bantu at the expense of the Negro, because I doubt whether it is really more moral to kill and eat prisoners of war or criminals than to keep them in a state of servitude guarded by rights. Indeed, among the Bantus the study of law is more difficult than among the true Negroes; for below Cameroon you will find in one district a slave-holding tribe like the Igalwa, and in the immediate neighbourhood a non-slave-holding tribe like the Fans. In one district you will find the entire tribe under one great king, who rules many subsidiary princes, as among the Fjorts, while in another tribe each village is a thing in itself with a general sort of law running through the whole tribe as far as regards the law of inheritance, the duties of relationship, and the conduct of commercial intercourse, as among the Fans and Bakele. Such being the state of affairs, I will confine myself to sketching briefly, first the constitution of society among a pure Negro tribe; secondly, that among a pure Bantu.

The natives of Calabar and of Brass and Opobo and Bonny Rivers are divided up into what they term Houses. These Houses are bound together in religious law by a common Long Ju Ju; and into groups by their secret societies, which have certain points of difference, but in the main enforce the same set of laws.

The House is a collection of individuals—I cannot say human beings, because the very dogs and canoes, &c., are part of it in the eye of the law, and capable of embroiling it, or advancing its interests by their actions. It is presided over by a so-called king, and beneath him are four classes, which we will take in order of influence, *i.e.*, rank.

1st. There are the free relations of the king, if he himself be a free man, which is not always the case; if he be a slave—virtually a trustee—the free people of the family he is trustee for.

2nd. Free people who have placed themselves under the protection of the House, rendering it in return for

the assistance and protection of the House service on demand.

3rd. The trade boys, a true slave section, yet having great power, as they trade for the House and increase its power by riches. They are requisitioned each trade season to procure so much trade stuff for the House, and anything they may acquire that is over and above this requisition is their private property, and any one conversant with the Oil Rivers will tell you that it is no uncommon thing for a trade boy to be richer than his owner, and that these men will not employ their riches in buying themselves free, but in buying slaves for themselves, who work under them and for whom they are responsible; and that their great desire is to found a House for themselves sufficiently powerful to attach to it poor free men. You will frequently meet with these slave Houses made up and governed by a man still himself a slave, and sometimes you will find them the richest and most flourishing in the district. Of the three chief kings in the Oil Rivers in our times two have been slaves, namely, Oke Jumbo and Ja Ja. Nana is a free-born man and the son of the great chief Alumbo, to whose House and power he succeeded.

Next in grade in the Great House to the trade boys come two sub-sections, both slave, but held in different esteem. The first sub-section is composed of the people born to the House of slave mothers and fathers, or slave mothers and free fathers. The second sub-section is composed of the equivalent to our criminal population—people who have, by committing crime, forfeited their liberty, or people who have been bought from neighbouring tribes. These are also in the Calabar district outcasts, chiefly from other tribes, people the neighbouring tribe would rather be without, particularly if by selling them about £12 to £18 a head on them could be made. Individuals of these two sub-sections may, according to their ability, become trade boys or remain tillers of the soil or paddlers of canoes.

The law of the districts where you find this system of "Houses" is mainly engaged with matters pertaining to

slaves, and the points of it that afford matter for an immense percentage of the palavers are, firstly, that law which is held by all slave-holding tribes I know, Negro and Bantu, namely, that the owner is responsible for the actions of his slave, so that when the slave does any damage the owner has to pay up. A careless or criminal slave being therefore a most expensive affliction, it follows that slaves who are habitual thieves are commonly killed or sold, while slaves who are always getting into palavers, getting themselves heavily fined, and so well-known in the district that no one would have them as a gift, unless they wanted slaves to kill at a funeral, are held to be only fit for another world, and so are utilized as a sacrifice to a god. And just so far as every slave owner is responsible for his slave, so is the head of a House responsible for the damage done by members of the House, both against each other and against outside society. Needless to say, if one member of a house steals anything from another member, or damages it, the House-father makes him return it or pay, and brings his influence to bear on the plaintiff in the action not to be extortionate as to damages, namely, not to claim damages in excess of the defendant's personal means, even if he has to bring that influence to bear with a bamboo; but when the plaintiff belongs to another House—possibly a powerful one—and he demands extortionate damages, it is hard on the House-father, for pay he must, and he can only have the satisfaction of bambooing one party in the action. Worse still is his position regarding those other belongings of the House, like the dogs, fowls, and canoes; if they get into mischief there is nothing for it but to pay up, as they have no property with which he can repay himself even partially. I well remember seeing a very nice canoe being chopped up in the Cameroon region, and, on asking why, being informed that it was the habit of that canoe to get adrift after dark and go down river, and get itself picked up by some one, who brought it home and had to be paid a goat and three yams—or to go and drift away and smash up

some lady or gentleman's fish trap, just when they had every expectation of making the finest haul of the season, and then, of course, the value of the presumed lost fish had to be paid "on top" of the canoe-finder's regular fee; so the owner, feeling he was being dragged into bankruptcy by the thing, was settling its palaver "one time." A similar instance of the right of a community to cast out or kill an individual member of it that is a chronic nuisance I saw when among an Ouroungou tribe. In the village there was a head of a woman on a stick. Human sacrifice being extremely rare—as far as my experience goes, non-existent among them, although the tribe is a notoriously savage one—I was astonished at this head, and was told that "she make palaver too much,"—namely, that she was always embroiling the village in quarrels, so the Elders killed her, having no taste for Helen of Troy affairs, I presume.

The other point most prolific of palaver is the ownership of children in this society that contains both mütterrecht and slavery. The children of slave-wives are the only kind of his own children that a free father has any ownership in; the children of a slave-father are the property of his owner unless their mother be a free woman, when they are hers. This is a clear enough law, but the complications come in from its being a common thing for a free man to marry a woman who is the property of some other man or woman. All her children are the property of her owner, not of her husband, and the owner can at any time take those children and sell them, or deal with them as he or she may think fit, unless the father-free-man redeems them—that is to say, pays a certain customary price to the mother's owner on the birth of each child, the mother still remaining in her slave condition. Palavers based on this law are distraction itself to white magistrates, and pretty hard work for the black chiefs, for with them there is no statute of limitations. Until the palaver has been tried, it is open; when it is set, it is set. You cannot reopen a palaver or make an appeal from the decision

of the chiefs to the higher power contained in Long Ju Ju, unless you make it at the time. Therefore the wily A will let his slave-woman live on with B without claiming the redemption fees as they become due, allowing them to stand, as it were, at compound interest. All the male as well as the female children of these children are, even unto the second and third generation and away into Eternity, his property with all the rights and obligations appertaining thereto. A man may die before he puts in his claim, in which case his property passes into the hands of his heir, who may foreclose at once on entering into his heritage, or may again let things accumulate for his heir. However, sooner or later, the foreclosure comes, and there is trouble. X, Y, Z, who are free men, have married some of the original A's slave-woman's descendants. They have either bought their wives right out, or kept on conscientiously redeeming their children as they arrived. Of course A or his heirs contend that X, Y, Z have only been wasting time and money by so doing, because the people X, Y, Z paid the money to had no legal right to the ladies. Equally, of course, X, Y, Z contend that their purchased lady, or her ancestress, was duly redeemed from the legal owners. Remember there is no documentary evidence available, and squads of equally unreliable oldest inhabitants are swearing hard on both sides.

We will now turn to a pure Bantu state of society, that of the Fjort people who live in the kingdom of the great unburied king. It is called Kacongo as a whole, after its first ruler. Fuma Congo, called by the Portuguese writers the King of Kongo, lived at San Salvador, and he had two sons, Kacongo and Loango. Their father gave them the two great regions now bearing their names, and the routes they took when travelling to take possession of their respective territories can still be traced by their having left fetishes at each place they spent a night at when on their journeys. These fetishes are called Nkissi-nsi, which means the mystery of the earth. The King of Congo's own native name was Fuma-nsi—the prince of the earth. He was a son of

Nzambi, the earth itself, and his son's due titles are Mueneu n' Fuma-nsi. With each son the King sent an Ngoyo or Rain Doctor, who is also spoken of n' Fuma-nsi.

The kingdom of Kacongo is divided into seven provinces: Kacongo, Ncotchi, Ngoio, Kansa, Backa, Chindendi, and Bondi. Each of these provinces is governed by its own set of princes, each set having six grades of rank. The province of Kacongo takes precedence over all other provinces, and its princes precedence over all other princes, because it was the residence of Kacongo himself. The throne is at present unoccupied, because, for reasons too many to go into here, Kacongo himself has never been properly buried; but the pre-eminence of the province over the others remains, and other provinces will send difficult cases—mainly those relating to the ownership of land—to be tried by the head princes of Kacongo.

Each family among these Fjort has its own town; the relationship is through the mother, but the wives have to live in their husband's town; they can claim protection and find asylum in their mother's town, and if any person gets ill they usually go to their own town to be cured. Each of these towns has in it a little patch of ground kept sacred. It is sacred to Nkissi's use, and its custodian is the Nyanga Nsi, the head man of the town. There are two other Nyangas—the Nyanga Nkissi is the witch-doctor, and the Nyanga lu Congo is the apothecary—the doctor who deals with ordinary diseases, and not those arising from witchcraft.

Upon the sacred patch of earth a hut is built, wherein the family fetish is usually kept, and you will notice that this patch of earth is always shaded by a tree. You may roughly be able to tell the age of a village by observing the age of its tree, for I am told the tree is always planted, and certainly I have seen the tree being planted, for a new town. To this sacred place of his own village the prince of a district summons his family and lieutenants when he is what he calls "Washing up"—namely, after sacrificing white fowls, the grass on the

sacred patch is cut down, and it is thoroughly tidied up, the day ending with a dance.

The Nyanga Nkissi has his hut away from the sacred patch, and in the hut he keeps his Nkiss image, a wooden figure into which nails are driven when it is to be communicated with, and he also sells charms, and is called in to find the cause of death of human beings.

These Nyanga Nkissi play so important a part in the administration of law that I fear I must detain you a little longer to explain them. They are a class apart from the head man of the family, and native tradition says they were wise men sent by Fuma Congo and his sons to their lieutenants in order to aid them in governing their territories. They are men acquainted with the mystery of the Earth, Nzambi; and I must here detain you to explain who Nzambi is, because there are only two people, as far as I can find out, who take any interest in Nzambi, Mr. R. E. Dennett, who lives among the Fjort, and has done so for seventeen years, well acquainted and keenly sympathetic with them, and knowing their language as well as they do themselves, and I myself. I do not pretend to anything like so intimate acquaintance with Nzambi as Mr. Dennett possesses, but I know other spirits just like her among other tribes, and I know her fairly well, so I venture to lay before you our joint opinion regarding this great spirit, whom you hear invoked by every man or woman before making a statement in a native palaver: "Ngong, Gong, Ngetan, Zambi," meaning, "Listen, listen, in the name of God." Her name is also used as an ejaculation by a person suddenly alarmed. In Fjort legends she is spoken of as the mother of a beautiful daughter, and you get accounts of her calling all the animals to great meetings or great palavers; as giving mankind all laws, ordinances, arts, games, and musical instruments, except the drum —the woodpecker invented that—and she stole it from him in a very mean way. It is a sad story, so I will not detain you with it now, as I hope through the munificence of the Folk-Lore Society that it and several

other important folk-lore stories of the Fjorts collected by Mr. Dennett will soon be published. You will also find quantities of stories, in which Nzambi appears as a poor woman with a hungry or thirsty infant on her back, who rewards those who help her—in almost all cases it is a man—and punishes those who refuse her help by turning their village into a lake or themselves into earth pillars. She holds palaver to settle quarrels between animals, and in the stories giving her decision is embedded an immense amount of Fjort law. But great as Nzambi is, still living and acting as she is to-day, away in the country of the Fjort, she is but the giver, the teacher, the taker away of things; she is not the Creator. The Creator is the great male god, Nzambi Mpungu, who is also the god who had fire and from whom Nzambi partially stole it; anyhow, he did not give free his boxes of lightning. I have no hesitation in saying I fully believe Nzambi Mpungu to be a purely native god, and that he is a great god over all things, but the study of him is even more difficult than the study of Nzambi, because the Jesuit missionaries who gained so great an influence over the Fjorts in the sixteenth century identified him with Jehovah and worked on the native mind from that standpoint. Then the Jesuits were turned out of Kacongo, for purely political reasons, by the Portuguese, and the Fjort were left without missionaries for more than one hundred years, and the consequence was, most of the Jesuit teachings underwent a sort of absorption into the native form of thought, and took on to themselves the Fetish form. Just as an example I will cite that you will find Nzambi Mpungu described by them, even where they have had no missionary since the Jesuits, as "the badly dressed one," and a close study of this will show you that he is called "the badly dressed one" from his having been identified by the Jesuits with the Figure on the Crucifix.

Nzambi herself the Jesuits identified with the Virgin Mary, which also gives now much difficulty in sorting facts when collecting Fjort Fetish, and having spoken

of the errors of others, I must speak of my own. I found that Mpungu meant a gorilla in that district. Now it was a little interesting to find the Fjorts imagining they had sprung from a gorilla, so I thought it ought to be investigated. I found Mr. Dennett's feelings were hurt in that after all the information I had from him, I was still capable of this error; he said that in the dialects of the south bank of the Lower Congo, Mpungu means a Creator or Father—in the Nlandi dialect it means "something that covers"—and that, as Nkissism was a religion introduced into Kacongo by the Nyangas sent from Fuma Congo, therefore the word, in its religious signification, had no connection with gorillas, but bore the south bank's signification, so I hope you will remember my error when any one comes and runs up a plausible tale about Fjorts regarding themselves as coming from gorillas, and I think if you will study Nzambi Mpungu, which we have no time to do now, you will agree with me that he is, like all the other great over-gods whom you will meet with on the West Coast—Nyan Kumpong Abasi Bum, &c.,—very intimately associated with the firmament. I do not say he is the personification of the firmament, because this god always lives above it, and you have to bore through the firmament before you can get at him—the boring is usually done by the woodpecker—and I think you know he lives there, because of the noise you hear him making—the thunder. But I must apologise for detaining you so long with Nzambi Mpungu, for he takes, as is usual with his class, next to no interest in human affairs—legal or individual. Occasionally you come across long conversations between him and his consort Nzambi, who is always on the worry about earthly affairs. His share in them is coldly cynical, often marked by sound sense, a sort of "If they will do it, whatever does it matter to me?" Now and again he will grant grand things as a gift to her, but by no means always. On one occasion, for example, there was a time of pestilence on earth, and Nzambi sent up to him to ask him to remove it. First she sent the Ngongongo, a wonderful

bird that can fly a wonderful distance, and when he reached Nzambi Mpungu he said, very carefully, "Guarry, guarry, guarry," and Nzambi Mpungu did not understand the language. Then she sent the rock-pigeon, who said a good deal but was not understood, and then she sent the ground dove, whom all men understood, and she said:

"Fusa malenda mafsi.
Vangi Maloango ma foy.
Vangi Makongo ma foy.
Sakela Sanga viscia."

And Nzambi Mpungu understood her perfectly, but he made no answer.

I fear you may think that by describing to you these two states of society I have far from demonstrated the intimate connection of the African's religion with the African's law—that I have described to you states of society reliant on human agency only—and this is what those societies look like when you first meet with them, and before you become conversant with them in detail and personally; but a very short residence amongst either Negro or Bantu tribes will make you ask yourself, "How is this society maintained?" You can see it is closely knit together, you can see that every member of it is responsible to or for some other member, you see there is no mass of unemployed, starving poor in it; no police; no workhouses; no prisons; yet that the property of each individual member, male or female, free or slave, is regarded as their possession, and that it is a thing that cannot be damaged or taken from them without reason.

When you investigate more closely you soon find the thing that holds the society together and acts as the great deterrent to crime against the society—and this thing is Fetish religion. I think that you will see that the whole system may be diagrammatically arranged thus: There are the great creating spirits like Nzambi Mpungu: beneath him are a class of great nature spirits: beneath them another class of nature spirits, which may be influenced by the class of spirits that live in human beings; equal to these human spirits are a

great class of spirits, the Mionde; beneath these there are an immense number of different sorts of spirits, who may be influenced by all the grades of spirits above them; men may use them, or the spirits which are above men may use them, either to guard against, or injure, others of their own class, or those below them. When a man wishes to use one of these Mionde he has to get it to come and reside in something that belongs to him—he makes it into a charm; I have elsewhere published all I think that I know of any importance regarding charms, I will therefore not detain you with them here, and merely remark that it is by using these, what one might call domesticated spirits, that the native secures to himself his property, both from human and non-human aggressors.

You will see this strikingly illustrated when as you walk along a bush path far from human habitation, you notice a little cleared space by the side of the path; it is neatly laid with plantain leaves, and on it are various little articles for sale—leaf tobacco, a few yams, and so on, and beside each article are so many stones, beans or cowries, which indicate the price of each article, and you will see, either sitting in the middle of the things, or swinging by a bit of Tie Tie from a branch above, Egba, or a relation of his—the market god—who will visit with death any theft from that shop, or any cheating in price given, or any taking away of sums left by previous customers. You can always tell which are the articles already paid for things taken, and which are those you can take and welcome if you pay cash down, because those for sale have the prices marked up. Again, the plantations of a Ba' Akele, or Fan town, are not in the manner of fenced-in back gardens, they are open clearings, sometimes a mile from the town they belong to. Sometimes for weeks at a time no one of their owners is near them by day; at night the slaves, or the lower members of the family, go up to the little huts in them and scare off the gorillas, elephants, bush cow and bush pig, but during the day there is nothing to guard them from human robbers but the bian. Also there are

the spirits who are kept and fed in little miniature huts on the verges of the plantation towards the forests, and whose work it is to help the human owner to keep down the evil weed spirits that invade it from the forest. Or you can take a canoe and drop down beside the slimy banks of any Oil river you choose and you will see quantities of fish traps, every one of them guarded, and practically efficiently guarded, against human depredations by charms; or, away in the Gorilla-land Forest, you will see, miles from any sign of human life, piles of cut billets of ebony, or rubber vine, each with its bian on, and if you were a Fan desirous, as is common with Fans, of taking those things you would hold it policy first to kill the human owner of them wherever he might be.

As guardians of property, then, you will see the Fetish spirits act well. I have never seen or been told of a case wherein a man's or woman's property had been seized and taken by another person, until its owner had been accused of witchcraft and killed. When a person has been convicted of witchcraft by means of the result of the ordeal or their own confession—it is not law for any human tribunal to convict on this charge—the property of the Ndochti, or Witch, passes as compensation to the injured family.

There is, no doubt, room for the bringing of false accusations, yet against it is this deterrent: A accuses B, for example, of having bewitched one of his wives, so that she died. B can say, "I did not do it. You did it. You are a witch yourself, I'll drink odum, or take the bean"—as the ordeal in the district may demand—"and you must take it too." And the law is that A must. Of course B would not dare to answer back like that if he were not innocent; for he would, if guilty, know he was committing suicide by taking ordeal; and if A knows his accusation is false he also knows the ordeal will kill him. The only way, therefore, when a false accusation is to be made is to take the Witch Doctor into confidence on the death of a member of the house. He is called in, in his capacity of finder-out of the person

who has caused the death, and by bribe he is persuaded to accuse the hated person. If, however, a man who knows a certain man hates him hears of a death in that man's family, he makes it his business to bribe the Witch Doctor not to mix him up in the affair, and often the Witch Doctor will take both fees, and then, to show his independence and superior knowledge of the whole affair, will accuse some third person, whose name has not been even mentioned to him. Neither of the original parties in the affair can do anything beyond come to the conclusion that it would be for the best if that Witch Doctor died of a disease. They dare not publish abroad that they had bribed him, because they would thereby confess to having witch intentions themselves, and would be promptly killed.

Among the Fjort there is another safeguard against false accusation. When a person dies messengers are sent to a Nyanga who lives far away in another village, taking with them a present of cloth. The Nyanga, on meeting them, describes to them all the circumstances connected with the life, last illness, and death of the man, and if this agrees with what they themselves know of it they place the cloth before him and request him to tell them what he knows of the cause of their relation's death. He goes into the consideration of the subject with his Nkiss, and after sometimes a very considerable delay he informs them that the man has died because some one has knocked a nail for his death into a certain Nkiss, or because a certain person has bewitched him, or because he had lived his life through.

If the death is held to have been occasioned by the driving of a nail, the relations go to the Nyanga of that Nkiss—it may be in a distant village—and they very respectfully, and with presents, ask its Nyanga if he remembers So-and-So having a nail knocked into this Nkiss, and if the Nyanga sees fit to remember, they ask him to point out the nail to them and they pay him to draw it out, so that the relations of the dead man may not also suffer and die through its action.

If a person has been accused, the relations accuse him

or her of it, and he or she has to take an ordeal drink made of powdered bark. Among the Fjort there are two kinds of this drink used for ordeal—M'Bunda and N'Kassa. The first is given to persons who cannot deny being witches, but who deny having injured the man in question; the second to those who plead entire innocence of witchcraft.[1]

I have detained you over the method of enforcing law as it exists among the Fjort and Loangos, and so have no time to enter into the way in which law is enforced among the true Negroes; but it is not necessary for me to do so, because you already have much information on the nature and action of the great secret societies who enforce the law from Cape Blanco to Cameroon. Similar secret societies exist south of Cameroon. A few of these are used in the enforcement of law, but in power and organization I have seen nothing south of Calabar to equal the Egbo of that region, nor the Oru you will find Ellis describing, nor the Porah I have learnt of from the Timenhas and Susus from the hinterland of Sierra Leone. From Cameroon until you reach the people who were once subjects of Fuma Congo, you will not find a dominant authority of any kind equal to Egbo. When, however, you do reach these subjects of the great unburied king, you again find a set of authorities or powers equal to the secret societies. These are the Nyanga Nkissi. They differ in being not groups of individuals whose knowledge and power is in various grades, but in being individual men attached as priests to individual Nkiss. You will find several great Nkiss in Kacongo. Their names are various; there is Bmzi, the most important in Kacongo, residing in the district of Ngoio. It is the great Nkiss for getting rain from.

Then there is Nzemba, the Nkiss at Landana, in the province of Ncotchi. Its Nyanga has three pools of water, one of which he uses when divining when there shall be abundance of fish, another for rain, another for sickness; and here, also at Landana, Mr. Dennett, who knows the district well, informs me that the caves there,

[1] See *The Burial of Fjort* "*Folk Lore*," June, 1897.

which the sea rushes into with great fury, are used in the election of a prince of the district. Into one of them the prince elect has to go. If the sea accepts him as prince it withdraws and allows him to enter; then it swallows him up, but only to convey him to his own town, where, duly shaved and painted, he is found by his people on their return from the sea-shore. If the sea does not retire and allow the prince to enter, the election is void, and another selection has to be made.

Then there is Chiguakka, the Nkiss of the Upper Loango, who forbids people who bathe in the river to put their heads under water; and beside these chief ones there are many others.

The study of the secret society among the Africans is, I think, a fascinating one, with all its elaborate formulæ of initiation; the way in which all free boys and girls are compelled by it to enter into what we may call the school, for if their parents do not place them under its charge at a proper age the spirit of the Secret Society will seize on them and swallow them, and only return them from its maw on payment of more than the school fees would have been. "Horee will have you" is a genuine fright to a Gambia native child, just as "Okukwe will have you" is to a Bapuk; and these societies' secret languages, and grades of power are all full of interest, as also is the study of the limitation of the power of the secret societies you see in the sanctuaries scattered all over the districts in which they exercise power. These sanctuaries also require an immense amount of study by the ethnologist, and I intend, when next out, to attempt carrying on the collection of information regarding them, which I have already commenced in the districts of Omon, Abasi, Inokun and Elivā-z-Onlange, &c. I openly own to preferring the true Negro to the Bantu, and yet I cannot but think that this religion of Nkissism has been much neglected by our ethnologists, and that it is full of interest both in itself and also from its having been imported from a region south of the Congo to one north.

The kind of religion that Nkissism has overgrown and

altered, one cannot say supplanted, is the kind evidently that you will find at present existing among the Igalwa and Ajumba, for you find beside the Nkissi left by the Sons of Fuma Congo in places where they personally stayed, other Nkiss, and there is no mistaking these other Nkiss, although they now have the pomp and ceremony of Nyanga attached to them, for anything else but Imbuwiri such as you meet away in districts to the north of where Nkissism has penetrated; they are, in fact, the old gods of the country which the new religion has adopted.

I beg now only to say that it is my belief that the connection between West African religion and law is far greater than you will see demonstrated by Ellis, Kohler, or Sarbar, and that this intimate connection is the reason of the great difficulty of destroying African native customs as they are called. It is true the laws of the Africans seem naturally to fall under two separate heads, which one might call civil and ecclesiastical. If, however, you attempted to study these laws under these two headings as separate things, you would soon find yourself enmeshed in difficulties, and I think the more repaying method is that which at first seems most difficult, namely, to commence with the study of the African conception of the status of man in nature. As far as I have gone it seems to make one think that there are certain affairs which we may call purely human affairs, such as inheritance of property, which the human class of spirits can deal with without calling in the aid of other classes of spirits to the affair. Then there are other affairs that it is wiser to call in other spirits to help the human spirit in. One charm does the work of twenty slaves, is a common saying among them; and then there is a third class of affairs to which you must call in extra-human spirits to help to decide, such as witchcraft, cases in which extra-human spirits are already involved.

You will also find the African making a clear distinction between sin and crime, "god palaver and man palaver" as he calls these respectively. The first is an

offence against a spirit; if it is an outrage on an important great nature spirit, who will rise up in its wrath and retaliate on the entire tribe, the man is killed by the tribe or family on whom vengeance would fall so as to appease the Ombuwiri or Sasabonsum; other sacrifices are made to the same end; if however, it is only a minor spirit, the man's own guardian spirit for example, that he has angered—he has broken his Ibet, Orunda, or Keechela—he is left to settle affairs with his spirit on his own account. Crime is an offence against human society which human society feels quite equal to cope with, though the assistance of a spirit may be called on to aid in its detection or prevention. You will find a rich field for studying this distinction between sin and crime in the matter of the African's views on lying—there is no intrinsic harm in lying, to his mind, because a man is a fool who believes another man on an important matter unless he puts on the oath; when he puts on the oath he calls in a great spirit who will make the man who tells a lie in its presence swell up and burst. I can honestly say I would not take an African's word on any important subject, if that word were spoken out of oath, but I would stake my life, as I have many times already done, on the word of the wildest bush cannibal in all West Africa if that word were spoken under oath.

Of the great human importance of the study of the religion, laws, and social status of the African native it is not necessary for me to speak; it is too self-evident that it is our duty to know the true nature of those people with whom we are now dealing in tens of thousands, so that by this knowledge we may be enabled to rule them wisely, to give them chances of advancing that they can really avail themselves of, and thereby save thousands of human lives, both black and white, by means of that true knowledge which I regard as the inward aid of God.

CHAPTER XXI

IMPERIALISM [1]

I VENTURE respectfully to think that to any one who is English, and who has been overseas anywhere, it has been a strange thing to see of late professional politicians wrestling, as with a difficulty, over the definition of the word Imperialism; as strange as though they wrestled, as with a difficulty, to define the word home, or honour, or mother. Similarly strange and more unpleasant has been the spectacle of a distinct outbreak of anti-Imperialism up here in England. It has been, so far, only a series of local outbreaks, and scattered sporadic cases, but so dangerous a disease in the heart of the Empire is no more to be neglected than similar appearances of the bubonic plague or the cholera morbus. Outbreak of anti-Imperialism! you ejaculate. The thing's impossible! where is it? Well, I dare say I am nervous, because I remember the time, and it's not so long ago, when England had a devastating epidemic of the disease—when she sent Gordon on a mean mission and then abandoned him—when she slept in China, and down round Majuba Hill sowed that crop of dragon's teeth the harvest whereof she is reaping to-day. As for where are the symptoms of another outbreak—well, they are showing in a worse place than usual: in the minds of thinking Englishmen, a thing which clearly demonstrates that at any rate what one might call the sanitation of

[1] A Lecture delivered in Liverpool.

Imperialism is imperfect. For example, you will find a distinct statement of anti-Imperialism in the June number of the *Contemporary Review*,[1] a statement I will attempt to deal with later; but far more serious than it are such things as the recent utterances of several expert statisticians and Mr. Kipling's poem "The White Man's Burden." Honestly, I do not think that the time has yet arrived when even the most insignificant Imperialist like myself can knock off work and say, "Oh, it's all right now, for England in England understands; she will never have anti-Imperialism again." Honestly, I do not see why she should not have it again as bad as ever, for no true safeguard has been built up against it.

And it must be clear to the meanest understanding that a return of it in the future will be attended by worse consequences, now there are more things to suffer from it when it comes, a larger Empire for it to blight. Believe me, there is danger, a danger no amount of sentiment, however glorious in colour, however wildly cheered to-day, will guard us from; and I respectfully beg to attempt to explain wherein I think that danger lies, which I can only do by first attempting to explain where it does not. Certainly it does not lie in any chance of any running short of England's power or England's money, but it lies in the chance that the time may come when she will run short of spirit to use these things in support of her Empire overseas. Nothing can make her spirit to support Imperialism a fixed and permanent thing save the knowledge—not the emotion or the sentiment, mind you, but the knowledge—that Imperialism is a good and honest thing. Once get her to recognise this, she will stick to it as to trial by jury and habeas corpus, but not till then. It is no use telling her it pays: she has seen Venice rolling in riches. It is no use telling her it is magnificent: she has seen Spain magnificent, and she sees them both to-day. It is not good enough. The only thing she in her heart of hearts knows is good enough is the thing she has all her youth fought for—justice. Any institution that has that for fundamental

[1] "The Seamy Side of Imperialism," by Robert Wallace, M.P.

principle, England will throughout the ages stand by, fight for, and conquer for, to the best of her ability. It is her one permanent desire, the one thing which in dealing with England either internally or externally, you, whoever you be, wherever you may be upon the scene, can depend on her for in the end.

Such being the case, let us now consider our Imperialism in this relationship, for by it it must stand or fall. Without considering it we can easily imagine Imperialism to have a career—a bright, prosperous little career, but nothing more; but that is not what we old-fashioned Imperialists desire for it or England. First, we will take that modern development of it, often called Jubilee Imperialism or jingoism; the democratic side of it, I believe the true side of it, a side I know it is fashionable to laugh at, or decry. I openly say I love it. It gives me the greatest pleasure to "sit in my room at night reading a good book," as worthy men enjoin, and to hear the beanfeasters go by singing "Let 'em all Come," or "Hands across the Sea;" and the other night I was indeed much moved by another manifestation of this thing. It was a wet night, and I, returning home from the meeting of a learned society, hailed a slowly crawling cab. "Sorry I can't take you, mum," said the driver, "I've a gent unconscious inside." "Dear me," said I, "why don't you take him to St. George's at once?" "He ain't a hospital case," said he, looking down on "the gent unconscious" through the trap door. "He'll be better, by and by. He's one of them colonials of ours just home to his native land for the first time, and he's gone and excited himself, that's all." I retired, and the cab and the colonist drifted away into rain; but still it was nice to think, in spite of the colonist's conduct and the inconvenience it gave me, of the old country, represented by the cabman, taking care of him like that. It was another of many previous manifestations of democratic Imperialism that has endeared it to me, and made me feel an esteem for it, in spite of the equally frequent manifestations of a profound lack of knowledge of the use of the globe, and such like things;

and this often abused "Jubilee Imperialism" seems to me to be the recognition by the democracy of England, as a whole, of that fact, with which up to our own time only great individuals, or scattered groups of Englishmen, have been aquainted with: namely, that we the English are English everywhere, and we must have the world a free and open world. A world wherein just, honourable, respectable men of all races, all colours, all religions, can live, worship, trade, labour, or live quietly, unhampered by a lot of pettifogging arbitrary rules and regulations and persecutions. Live as free men, whether rich or poor, white or black, cultured or uncultured, ambitious or unambitious. We know from centuries of experience that this ideal of making freedom for the world is not to be expected from any race save the Teuton. Other races who excel us in many excellent things have this ideal of freedom, but it is restricted for their own men, and in the case of France for the races under their sway, but for them alone. They do not give to the stranger within their gates, to the foreigner, an equal law and justice with their own men. It has been one of England's truest honours that ever since she developed her Imperial policy, since she first went out overseas to fight for religious and commercial freedom against the over greatness of Spain, she has steadily striven towards the ideal that any man could come anywhere under her flag, and, let him be Celt, Slav, or Asiatic, or African, he would be protected by her law and participate in her hard-won freedom. This Imperialism, our Imperialism, is the thing that is not ashamed of wanting all the world to rule over. It is the faith we have fought for in the face of enormous difficulties and dangers and discouragements, both internal and external, and we old-fashioned Imperialists to-day believe it is the real spirit of England, believe John Milton is our singer, and intend to defend our policy against whoever may come against it; and internally or externally we mean to keep our powder dry, and carefully attend to the destruction of those moths that would, while pretending to be Imperialists, eat our ermine, namely, those men who

make it to-day possible for honourable humane Englishmen like Mr. John Morley, Mr. Courtney, and Mr. Wallace, to rise up and question the righteousness of the spirit of Imperialism in England.

Yet, you say, you said the utterances of men like Mr. Morley were a symptom of anti-Imperialism. So I did and so I do, but I did not say they were anti-Imperialists, but that those utterances would tend to spread a spirit of anti-Imperialism. Such men as they are truly not destroyers, but in a way preservers of our Empire, and the nation owes them a debt of gratitude for their honest endeavours to keep England's honour clean and to preserve her Imperialism from sinking into being in our times a stockbroker's nigger business, or drifting into a swamp of false finance. In fact, they are truly but pointing out where the moths are getting into our ermine, where the rust is eating in on our sword-blade—not foes but friends.

I am perfectly well aware this is not a fashionable view. I know many excellent Imperialists say "that certain things are unavoidable when one is dealing with diplomacy," or, "certain things are unavoidable when one is dealing with civilised races, acting on uncivilised excess," and so on; but that is rubbish—and dangerous rubbish at that—for once let the moth get a hold, once let the rust eat in, the thing is done for. You can get a new suit of ermine, but you cannot get it for the same thing—freedom. You can get a new sword-blade, but it will not have the old magic on it—fearlessness. Well, you now say, why have you not included Mr. Kipling among these aforesaid moth and rust destroyers? I can only answer—he does not belong to this group, though I have cited his "White Man's Burden" as a factor in encouraging anti-Imperialism to spread in the heart of the Empire. We all know that England owes to him probably more than to any other living man—unbounded gratitude for all that he has done to make her "find herself," not only in her might and power in this world to-day, but in her duty to God; he, like that greatest English singer, John Milton, calls on us all to be "God's Englishmen"; never

has the true Imperial policy for us been better put than by Mr. Kipling when he sang:—

Hold ye the Faith—the Faith our Fathers sealed us,
Whoreing not with visions—over-wise and over-stale.
Except ye pay the Lord,
Single heart and single sword,
Of your children in their bondage He shall ask them treble tale.

Keep ye the Law, be swift in all obedience:
Clear the land of evil—drive the road and bridge the ford.
Make ye sure for each his own
That he reap what he hath sown;
By the Peace among our people let men know we serve the Lord.

Had he seen the modern Imperialists listening, little need would there have been for him to write "The Recessional"—also is he, in a way, the greatest practical empire-maker we have with us. Men away, far from home and England, feel thanks to him, that England cares for them, that they matter to her, and that their work seems a work worth doing. For has he not sung our song, the song of the likes of me and many better men and women, that of "The Lost Legion"? But when Mr. Kipling the other day sang "The White Man's Burden," he struck a string alien to us, and we liked it as much as a wet slate pencil rubbed against a slate; it was the first line we had ever met of his that we did not understand—it found in our hearts no echo. We old-fashioned Teutons have never felt any amount of Empire any burden, and we do not intend to rule "sullen, silent people"; such things are not in our line, we want and we will have all the world we can, and we will have it no burden to us; nor will we calmly allow England to be a burden on those we gather beneath the shadow of her wings. Our watchword is Egmont's "Fruchtheit und Freiheit! Froheit und Ruhe!" We know no white man's burden save of white man's making; we can manage the rest. Supposing this is so, you remark. You have only said that Mr. John Morley and his group are really helping Imperialism, and that Mr. Kipling has only once failed to please your group. Where is the

danger of these men aiding a general policy-moulding outburst on anti-Imperialism? That is soon demonstrated. Mr. John Morley's group are like unto medical books—bad reading for the unprofessional. You know how a sound healthy man, may be with just a touch of gout or dyspepsia on him, will, on perusing a physician's *vade mecum*, straightway fall into the belief that he has everything in it the matter with him, barring the spotted diseases, and those he fears may be coming on. Of course, he does not from imagination really get any organic disease, but nevertheless he gets ill for a day or so and is a pestilent nuisance to his family, for he thinks they do not realise the difficulty of his position. They think he is making a fool of himself, and that he is perfectly able to attend to his business—their interests—energetically, if he chose, and things are said during this crisis which are not forgotten by either party for years.

Now take the case of the ordinary stay-at-home, honest Englishman, who has got a vote, and who has so far, in our day, acquiesced in an Imperialistic policy, believing it means an extension of justice and freedom to the world, is a sound self-supporting policy that will not add any extra burden to his already heavy burden of rates and taxes. He is getting gradually, and from so many quarters, told nowadays that that sort of Imperialism does not exist. Imperialism is quite another thing. There are eminent statisticians expressing the fear that England is in a parlous state, living on her accumulated wealth—wealth which was acquired before Imperialism became her Government policy. They say she is not only living on her capital, but, by investing money in unrepaying regions, is piling up debt in the future. They say that money is urgently wanted to enable us, by means of technical schools, to retain our commercial supremacy, which, according to them, we are rapidly losing. He hears about grants in aid of colonies in a decayed condition, like the West Indies; he remembers how that particularly staid statesman, Lord Salisbury, has said things about "light soils" and "swamps," and that British taxpayer thinks about Imperialism

and his income tax and begins to feel nervous. Then when he turns for consolation to the consideration of the great moral and spiritual benefits he has conferred on the world by his Imperial policy, he has some nice hearing in this department nowadays. He is butchering thousands of good men with Maxim guns, and he is reducing the rest of them to practical slavery by forced labour. If there are any left over from these two performances, he is degrading them. He is told, as a general rule, that he is doing this to make money for himself; he knows this is not true, for he knows his income tax keeps up, but he knows there is something true in the rest of it, and he does not like it. Imperialism begins in his mind, as with Lancelot Gobbo's father, to "something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste." Well, feeling the wavers coming on, knowing that *The Spectator* and even Lord Charles Beresford has doubts as to whether England has not now as much Empire as her power and intelligence can safely stand, he turns to his Kipling—Kipling, who sang him the "Flag of England," and Mr. Kipling, if you please, treats that poor good man to "The White Man's Burden" Oh my income tax! says he, and he is down with anti-Imperialism in a marked, well-developed form; and because the British voter is ill, Imperial affairs all over our Empire, but particularly in the garrisoned region of it, the tropics, are brought up with a round turn, to their great detriment and suffering. It is a highly ridiculous thing of course, but sad for all that, and I think it is excusable if an old-fashioned Imperialist like myself feels savage at large, both with the men who mismanage Imperial administration, and let it get the moth and rust in it, and with the voter who is governed by emotion, and who by demanding nothing from his representative statesmen beyond good intentions, and no drain on the exchequer, allows a system of amateurism to represent him Imperially in all regions oversea which are directly under the direct control of the House of Commons.

Now having laid down these preliminary principles, I

nobly restrain myself from having a fight with the authorities on statistics, who have thrown doubts on Imperialism paying—nobly, because I have always found great authorities on obscure statistical affairs most excellent company, exceedingly congenial to me, to whom statistics are as music is to some people; instead, I turn, in conclusion, to attempting to answer Mr. Wallace's article on the seamy side of Imperialism. First we will take the main argument of it, namely, that Imperialism has a bad influence on England at home. Mr. Wallace thinks "expansionist Imperialism means more despotism abroad and more aristocratic recrudescence at home." Well, that is not what one might call strictly true. You know, for example, Clive was not an aristocrat, and those much vilified men, the privateers, buccaneers, and pirates, who simply kept England going on the sea, and were open-doorers of the most determined character, were not aristocrats: the aristocrats in their days were mostly fighting European Powers on the Continent. But where should we be to-day had England not had buccaneers, privateers, pirates? Better than we are, you may say. Well, we should not be Imperial England. Holland or Belgium would be more our size, but a Holland without a Netherlands India, or Belgium without a Congo Belge. Imperialism is, thanks be, to-day the united spirit of all classes of Englishmen, from the highest to the lowest; and if they know it is so, there is triumph and content in the hearts of all those old Imperialists, plebeian or patrician, Sir Richard Grenville, Sir Francis Drake, Sir John Hawkins, Captain England and Sir Walter Raleigh and Bartholomew Roberts, whose arms, ornaments and skeleton lie beneath the sea by Cape Lopez in West Africa.

Then the second great accusation Mr. Wallace brings against Imperialism is that the money and the intellectual force that should be spent on improving education and local sanitation in England is thrown away on the overseas English Empire. As for the money, I own we do throw away a million where a properly expended £500 would do the work as well. I own we are given

to paying a pound for sixpence; but, on the other hand, do we not do much the same thing pretty often up here in England's home affairs? While as for the second count in the accusation, that we absorb a dangerous amount of the fund of intellect and attention of the home-staying English public, I utterly deny it. Pick up your newspaper any morning you like, and glance over it; note the percentage of space given to Dreyfus, the last stage play and the police reports, and that given to information on the oversea Empire. Go round about intellectual, cultured society and listen to its conversation —you will lose all anxiety about cultured men and women up here overworking themselves on Imperialism. The affairs of Cape Colony, owing to the personality of Mr. Rhodes, and the large amount of Stock Exchange interest he involves; and the affairs of the Sudan, owing to the personality of Lord Kitchener, the interest he attracts by being a successful soldier, the avenger of Gordon, the breaker up of the late Mahdi, unmarried and said to be averse to women, I own do absorb a good deal of popular attention and enthusiasm; still they do not do so to a really brain-spraining extent. For example, I am known to have been in Africa. One day I get myself looked down on because I say, "No, I have never been to Khartoum nor seen Lord Kitchener"; the next because I say, "No, I never saw Mr. Rhodes, and have never been in South Africa." I see other wanderers come and sit down at the hearth of England and go through the same experience. I remember, when things were going very badly for us in the Gold Coast hinterland, and on the Niger, the percentage of attention those things received from the general public compared with that given to Oxford andCambridge refusing degrees to women, and affairs connected with the London County Council. Had it not been for the spirit of general Imperialism we should have had no attention at all. Look round you to-day; is the general public mind exhausting itself over the Venezuela boundary arbitration or the all-British cable, or the America and Canada palaver? Not a bit of it. That mind is practically virgin soil—

we have not planted a headache in it, and it is most unfair for those leaders who are interested in English domestic affairs to tax us with having done so.

This spirit, however, of advocating one English interest at the expense of another, is deplorably rife among us all. Those Imperialists who are interested in China and ignorant of Central Africa "speak disrespectfully of the Equator," and tell you "one province in China is worth all Africa." Those interested in Africa tell you that as England is a great manufacturing country she will do herself no good by pulling out the plug in China and letting loose on herself and the world at large an enormous and superior mass of manufactures; while, on the other hand, Africa is a great consumer of manufactured goods—a great producer of raw material for our manufacturers, a great source of raw gold supply; and there is civil war among us overseas Imperialists, instead of mutual help. Then again, those who stay at home in England and attend to educational, sanitary and Church matters, are also in a true sense of the word Imperialists; they strive to support the heart of the Empire, to make England's towns sweeter and purer, spiritually and materially; to bring up the next generation of the English sound in body and in mind: their work is as important to the whole Empire as the work of those who, overseas, expand the Empire territorially, because on the little island in the North Sea depends the defence and the very existence of the oversea section. Were England at home to get sick at heart again, as she was before Cromwell came; as she was for a space after he went; as she has been now and again since, where would the English Empire overseas be? Well we know, for we remember Amboyna, the loss of that region now the United States, the abandonment of Gordon and the South African affairs of 1874. We overseas who work for the Empire there, look to those who work on the domestic affairs of England to prevent by their influence for good such catastrophes happening again. We reverence them; but, why in the name of goodness and

commonsense, should these home-workers be so abominably prone every now and then to call us "Jingoes," "mad expansionists," and such-like things? and to openly hint that we should be spending our time better in attending to domestic affairs in England; namely, those of us who are ministers of religion, attending to home religious affairs, instead of trying to convert the heathen; those of us who are commercial men going on carpet-bagging expeditions about Europe and other civilised places, trying to sell manufactured articles, instead of devoting our time to supplying the manufacturers with the stuff they use?

Picture to yourself, my friend, what the place would be like if we took this advice. Think of the row of it on the hearth of England. All the missionaries of all the various denominations, every one of them an ardent, earnest man and zealous, working away on this little island, on the unbelievers therein and on each other. Then all the statesmen, now engaged in administering our colonies abroad, mercifully now to a certain extent separated from each other, all crammed into one House of Commons. Well, it is patent to the meanest understanding that such a state of affairs would make this little island in the North Sea absolutely uninhabitable for respectable working men and quiet students, and the amount of energy bottled up here would for a certainty plunge England into war with the whole Continent, and the United States of America on top within six months. No, things are better as they are; there are plenty of good workers in England for England's domestic affairs, and plenty of money to support them, as is shown by a Bank rate of four per cent., and the recent adventures of Mr. Hooley; and there are plenty of English, like myself, that are better employed anywhere, on the equator even, than kept at home; and it is not our blame if a company promoter can get more money than an antarctic expedition or a technical education scheme.

It is not necessary for me to deal with the other accusation in Mr. Wallace's paper at any length here,

for this accusation that Imperialism is an undue strain on England, hindering her own higher development, is Mr. Wallace's main contention, and he returns to it again and again. He says, "History has shown us that expansion has so eaten into our resources and drained away our powers that we have never been able to perform our highest task, the work of raising our own national civilisation; while the Empire is vast and showy our national education is small and contemptible, and the trade statistics show that the Empire fails to replace what it has taken away." One can only answer to this by categorical denial. History does not show it. During the modern outburst of Inperialism there has been an equally great outburst of practical and energetic endeavour to develop our own civilisation. If the Empire is vast and showy so is our national education establishment, and the latter absorbs more English home revenue than our Empire does, for most of it is,—as all of it, I grant, should be,—self-supporting, and those trade statistics show nothing of the kind. It is pathetic to see a man evidently honestly devoted to the interests of England's democracy, falling into so very great an error. How it is possible for any thinking man to do so I own I cannot understand, for he must know that our Imperialism has given to millions of Englishmen, opportunities of happiness, comfort, prosperity, the free exercise of all honest ambition, overseas. Think of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Contrast the life an Englishman can live there with the life a German can live in South America, an Italian in Brazil. The one is building upon his own freehold land, the other on leasehold; the one is making his own country, the other the country of an alien.

The sub-contention in Mr. Wallace's paper is that our Imperialism is doing no good to the races other than our own beneath our sway. He says, "Is our present rule everywhere free from oppression and demoralising influences? Where does it make for peace and order? Are the silent Indian people contented and happy? Are we really making them strong and self-reliant, or are we

enervating them and rendering them less capable of standing alone?" I am quite with Mr. Wallace here, only I should not put these things as questions, for it is beyond question that we are not doing our work with these people as we should do it, except in our great region India, where we employ in our administration experts and have brought to bear on them good intentions backed by enormous knowledge. When we do this in tropical Africa, tropical Africa will be a credit to us, but not till then. If we fail to speedily turn our attention to this, we shall build up in that interesting but unhealthy continent a new Ireland in feeling, a new West Indies in finance. But it is not a necessary part of either England's nature nor her Imperial spirit that this should be done. I appeal to all true Imperialists to bring their minds and energies to the service of giving England that truer knowledge which Spinoza calls the inward aid of God. With that knowledge England's instinct will guide her to justice. When just, there will be no chance of her ever being "one with Nineveh and Tyre"; her Empire will be permanent. We want scientific knowledge and we want statecraft placed at the service of Imperialism. We want to know what there is good in the nature and institutions of alien races beneath our sway, because from the native good in them alone can we help on their developments. Regions like Central Africa are like unto a neglected garden. You can go and pull up or cut down everything and have a bonfire, and the garden will be tidy, as tidy as the Abomination of Desolation. You cannot colonise it with Englishmen as you could Australia. Or you can take the other course with that wild garden, weed it, plant it, prune it, cultivate it into a beautiful thing. Which will you do? leave it a weed-grown place, where what is good is being strangled by rank weeds as the small Imperialist would wish you to? clear it out and have a bonfire —as the windy-headed amateur Imperialist, the short-sighted financier, the medal-hunting young soldier, who,—naturally and properly disgusted at your not

fighting a European power, says "For Heaven's sake let's fight some one"—would have you do? Or will you weed the garden and be as ready to fight white man as black as Sir Francis Drake was? You have your choice to-day. This last course is the hardest one. You must study; you must not allow your statecraft to be so imperfect that that great commercial class, England's manufacturers, on whose ability and industry you so greatly depend, are under England's flag in the self-same position that the Uitlanders were under Mr. Kruger. You must drop the use of many soothing words and all humbug, but it is worth your doing. The other courses in the end are not, they lead you to the wrecking place of Spain; but this will give you, and will give you alone, the power to toss the torch of England's freedom on undimmed to England yet to come.

CHAPTER XXII

IMPERIALISM IN WEST AFRICA[1]

I AM certain you will feel a sense of irritation at having some one come and talk to you about West Africa when it is South Africa you are all so deeply interested in. I also am interested in South Africa, in the way so many of you are; like you I have lost friends there, friends who I would far rather were mourning me than I them. But this does not justify me in joining the ranks of the uninitiated who, without any local knowledge of South Africa, are now discoursing on it by the dozen. It is no use my pretending to talk about South Africa in detail. The other side of this present rebellion in South Africa, namely the effect it has had on the British working classes, the quiet, steady, fierce splendour of spirit with which they are facing affairs, I should in a measure be justified in speaking on, merely adding a tribute to the well-deserved tribute of admiration it has elicited; for all this autumn it has so happened that I have been away among the manufacturing towns of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Scotland, endeavouring to impress upon the working man there the importance of our tropical Empire at large, and of West Africa in particular. It is highly unlikely I persuaded them to this belief, but I can assure you that there is no doubt they persuaded me into a profound belief, a conviction, that such a

[1] Lecture delivered at the Imperial Institute, February 12, 1900.

nation, properly led, must, let outside circumstances be what they may, become triumphant. But after all, you know this as well as I do, so until I know something of South Africa personally, I will say no more about it. I now turn to tropical Africa, of which West Africa is the most important part. I often feel, as I am sure the lady who told the tales in the *Arabian Nights* often felt, namely, that I shall get killed before I am half through with my information, and, moreover, I have more real cause for this fear than the aforesaid lady ever had—I do not mention her name, you all know it, and it is difficult to pronounce—for the information I have had to give about West Africa is far less charming than her tales were, and my grammar and composition infinitely inferior to hers. But up to to-night you have been very kind and tolerant to me about my West African discourses, and I humbly beg to thank you all most sincerely on this, the last night I shall, in all human probability, have the honour of speaking to London.

Such being the case, I hope you will forgive me for to-night speaking to you unreservedly about West Africa. And if I seem to you to speak frivolously and presumptuously, I pray you remember I am fond of the place, and remain a hardened, unreformed, Imperial expansionist. I believe that you are in for a crash, in the West African section of our Empire, a shaking out of dream-land, similar to that which you have had in South Africa, though not a military one, mainly a financial one, but with widespread bad effects on our Empire at large; and I know perfectly well that when that tropical African Empire of ours gives trouble, people up here will be persuaded that it is the joint fault of the Imperial expansionists who gave it to England, and the necessary consequence of the nature of the natives and the country. People up here who will come to believe any such explanation to be a true one, will imagine a vain thing. But I would rather they never had an opportunity of trying to decide who was to blame—rather there was

never a mess for them to deal with—gallantly as they would, I am sure, deal with it; therefore I venture to speak to-night concerning the matter, for I believe it is in your power to-day to avert a disaster; to-morrow, the men who will have to deal with affairs will be either free men, working for healthy progress and development, or men fettered by your mistakes, busied in correcting your errors. You stand at the parting of the roads. You are now undertaking the administration of extensive territories and great populations in West Africa. They will not stand at the parting of the roads, they will be down the road you elect to take to-day—either the road that will lead to a success, such as no nation has yet achieved in the tropics, or the old road that Spain and Portugal trod. It may be, indeed, you will not choose a definite road, but merely drift. Our predecessors drifted to and fro considerably in South African affairs—you see the consequences. I hope you will not give England to-morrow such a job in West Africa, merely to save yourselves a little trouble now, in this generation.

It is, believe me, an important and interesting question which road you choose in dealing with West Africa to-day, and one worthy of your consideration. I fear you will take the easiest one for the time being, but I have never been a thoroughly cheerful person on the future of our Empire in West Africa, nor have I met any one who has ever been there who was. The truth is, it is an exceedingly difficult region, and that fact is forced on any student of it, or even a mere visitor to it. I have spoken of those difficulties natural, racial, historical and ethical elsewhere, so I will not detain you with them now. I merely beg respectfully to say, that I believe that when you take over any job you ought to know what you are aiming at getting. I believe it is absolutely essential for our success in the tropics, of which West Africa is the most difficult part and one of the most important, to know definitely what we want there. There are two ideals going in the public mind for the tropical portion of our Empire, and a third I will

deal with later. I don't like any one of them. One is to gradually fit such regions as tropical Africa, Egypt and India, to become self-governing; the other is drift—my feelings regarding drift are unsuitable for utterance here, and little better with regard to the others, but I will keep them in hand, and merely observe that the statement by you to those peoples of India, Egypt and tropical Africa, that you intend, when they are fit for it, to hand over independence to them is poison. You see the trouble comes in by a difference of opinion between them and you as to when they are fit. They say we are fit to do without you now; you know they are not. They would precious soon find it out, but they don't know it now, and there is your unfulfilled promise, and you look like a humbug; and so they breed bad feelings instead of attending to improving the state of their country, breeding cattle or growing grain enough to keep them from starving. Gentlemen, I hope you won't poison your tropical African Empire with the idea that you mean to some day cast it off. I humbly beg to suggest that our Imperial aim in the tropics should be to weld them and these little islands in the North Sea firmly together—to be together a free and happy nation, co-operating for mutual advantage; a great store and treasure house of fighting men, ready money, statesmanship and science, whereby the whole Empire may be defended against the outside world whenever it may choose to wage either commercial or red war on us—we, who should be liberty and justice. Think of all your tropical possessions as if they were towns, each with a way of its own and a worth of its own, as Sheffield, Leeds, Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester have. Do not think of them as if they were Australia or Canada or New Zealand, who are young Englands overseas.

You may say it is quite impossible to inspire a national feeling of devotion to England among coloured races. I do not pretend to know Asiatics, but I know Africans of various kinds—and remember they vary quite as much as Europeans—and I have no hesitation

in saying that the finest of all native African races, the true negroes, whose home-land is in West Africa from Gambia to Cameroon, can be made as loyal and as devoted to England as the man in the street up here, provided you do not make two mistakes in dealing with them to-day. One mistake is giving him, unintentionally I am sure on your part, an agrarian grievance; any gentleman, even a white gentleman, one of the truest white gentlemen ever made, and one of the bravest—the Irish—when he has an agrarian grievance in his mind is not a comfort to the Empire or himself. It will be the same with the true negro if you give him now, for the first time, mind you, an agrarian grievance. Buying and selling him from people from whom he thought you had the right to buy him never shook his love for England; but go and take away his own land in his own home country when you said you would not, in treaties and by word of mouth for more than a hundred years; go and make him, without consulting him, a tenant at will where he was once holder absolute, and a trustee for his future generations in the bargain, and you will give him an agrarian grievance; and how he feels about it he explained in the Hut Tax War in Sierra Leone. Then there is the other mistake you can make with him—I am obliged to refer to it delicately because our American cousins caught the disease (all mistakes are diseases) very bad in their constitution. Instead of taking as model principles those of the British Constitution, which I take it are Liberty, Justice and Representation, they took those of the French Revolution, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. This is an unworkable thing because not in touch with facts; hence it is one of the most dangerous diseases a National Constitution can catch, and it has a horrid eruption, humbug. You have got a nasty touch of it yourselves, but for goodness sake, stamp it out; humbug is poison wherever found. Strong men up here may just sneer at it and consider it is necessary; but strong men in Africa—negroes—won't look at it in that way; in their eyes it is breaking Faith; and in their eyes it is

a crime between man and man, that no bribe, no gift, nothing but blood can wipe out. You may give to every true negro a Bond-street suit of clothes, a grand piano, a mangle, a Maxim gun and a university, to make him love you, and he won't, if you break your given word. Therefore I pray you, don't promise him, as America did, a vote in a vestry system, not his vestry but your own vestry, where you cannot have him. Do not promise him a thing you cannot give him; promise him something you can.

As custodians of the British Constitution you can safely promise him three things: Liberty for all men to develop all that is good in them, to battle down all that is bad; Justice to all men; even-handed tiger Justice that knows neither white from black, weak from strong, poor from rich. Such Justice can only be attained by man imperfectly, only be approached by the paths of knowledge of the facts of the case tempered with mercy, because human knowledge is so incomplete; but this pure hard Justice is the thing to aim for. I pray you do not think it can be attained by sentimental mercy alone, that is a side street. I pray you do not think it can be attained by having one Justice for white and one for black. Thirdly, you can promise him Representation, not your form suited to your own race, but his form suited to his race. By doing this you will have him with you as a free, unsmashed man—not as a whitewashed slave or an enemy. Lastly, gentlemen, in connection with this Imperial consideration of West African affairs, I beg you, now you are extending your Empire into tropical Africa, where you are unfettered by mistakes in the past, to start fair and keep fair; be not led away by catch phrases; promise no man the moon; but keep every promise you have given, and may give in future, though it be hard to keep. The sanctity of the given word is a higher sanctity than good intentions. I know there are two parties against me in this contention. One party says solemnly it is our duty to elevate the African by every means in our power. I say yes, except one, that one is disgracing our own honour. The other party

says, what is the good of saying we can keep honourable in tropical Africa, when part of our Imperialism necessarily is taking the country from its native owners? I say no, that is not part of our Imperialism there. The extension of our Empire there does not necessarily mean subjugating the native and taking from him his lands, or property, and the men up here who may so engineer our Imperialism are not true Imperialists, British Imperialists, they are remainders over from the councillors who sent his late Majesty Philip of Spain down the road to ruin. This policy of creating an agrarian grievance in tropical Africa is a policy neither profitable nor just; there is neither gold nor good in it, and it is one, I believe, you will not pursue if you will give the same amount of earnest thought and consideration to Imperialism that you give to the grievances of cyclists about the state of the roads. On the other hand, with those people who say we have no moral right to take over the whole of tropical Africa, I have no sympathy. They are estimable people but narrow-minded, for there is a thing in tropical Africa, even in the most highly developed native part, West Africa, that no native has, so in taking it we are not stealing it from him. That thing is the Oberhoheit. There is no English word for it—it means the power to rule at the top of things, the power to enforce peace among peoples, to secure commercial communication and provide an ultimate court of appeal in matters of Justice, to be king over kings, ruler over many peoples. This power that we steal from no one, we have every right to have—it does not need to steal the native's land. The other policy we can pursue in tropical Africa, the Landeshoheit, is one we have neither right to, nor use for, in tropical Africa, which is unfit, and will, as long as astronomical conditions are as they are, remain unfit for colonisation by our white population. It is a region suitable for our trade colonisation, but what we want there is not Landeshoheit but Oberhoheit. It is not imperially necessary for us to steal the native's land in deadly West Africa, and give the true negroes in their home country an agrarian

grievance; so I hope you will not do it. I suppose one ought not to have friends who are born thieves, but I have one—he is alive still, and I trust may long remain so. I will not mention his name or address, but merely a sad affair that occurred to him while I was in his society, though I assure you I was not an accessory before the fact. A box, a white man's packing case thing, was on his canoe in which I was then travelling; well, when we retired in the evening time to an island and opened the case, it contained nothing but Alexandra feeding bottles for infants. My poor pirate friend's remarks I will not dwell on, they are unfit for repetition here. The way he had personally to whack his subordinates who grinned—they all grinned—was truly sad. The whole thing was deeply deplorable from every point of view, for, with an enormous amount of care, trouble, enterprise, and daring, he had been and stolen that case from a missionary, and that case was something that was no mortal good to him. True, he was a family man, he had infants of his own, dozens of them, but he could not work off those feeding bottles on them, they would not have taken to the things, and of course he had, by taking them, got the back of the real owner of those feeding bottles badly up. Well, if you steal the Landeshoheit in West Africa, you will do the same thing my friend did—and will be morally as bad as he, and make an equal fool of yourself in the bargain, for your own infants won't colonise those lands. If you must steal things, for goodness' sake steal something useful.

Well, West Africa's worth to us consists in its being the richest portion of our tropical African Empire. The worth to us of tropical possessions, especially when they are very unhealthy to white men, as West Africa is, is a thing that has frequently been questioned; some eminent men have gravely doubted whether our recent great expansion in West and tropical Central Africa has been wise, while others only reconcile themselves to it because they believe our rule confers a benefit on the native population. But others, whom I humbly follow,

say that tropical raw-material-producing regions are as necessary to us as a great manufacturing nation as wheat-producing regions are to us as a densely populated one, and we have a safer hold both on wheat and tropical raw material when it is grown under our own flag. As you know, one school among the students of the sources of our national wealth holds that the prosperity of England depends on the prosperity of the whole world, more than it does on her own oversea-empire. Of course in a way it does; but what average cautious man would trust the world at large, just because we invest money in it and trade fair with it, to behave well and steadily as a whole for more than a few years at a time, now and then? Not I, at any rate. Mundane affairs are in an imperfect state, and I believe will for some time remain so. Therefore I believe mere common sense and caution enforce on us the advisability of having an all-round self-contained empire on which we could fall back for supplies, were any part of the rest of the world to fail us in them. The misery entailed on English homes by the cotton famine in the days of the American Civil War seems almost forgotten, excellent object lesson as it was. Raw cotton possibly will not fail us again, though it is awfully high priced to-day, but we should be inconvenienced in tropical raw material if the States of Central and South America were to neglect business for war—not so deeply inconvenienced as we were in the sixties, because we can now, thanks to our West African, Malayan and Indian possessions, get tropical raw material, for example rubber, from them; but still the inconvenience would be bad enough. Surely then it is better for us to hold such regions ourselves than to rely entirely on foreign States and their possessions. Now West Africa is one of the richest regions for tropical stuff. Be it granted it is unhealthy, and, I may say, you may take it as a general rule that throughout tropical Africa the regions that are the most unhealthy are also the richest. Plateau lands there of mica schist, mountain flanks and deserts, are all very well in their way,

except the first-named, which is an utter abomination —but practically valueless, because India can do all they can do, and do it better. But the rank, great, stinking, steaming swamp lands are rich, and no continent can touch Africa for them, particularly West Africa, which is a very rich goldfield into the bargain. I fear it is absolutely necessary that we should pay a toll to King Death for holding Empire in West Africa—a toll in men dying of fever that is a higher percentage than the percentage that we are losing now on the battle-field of South Africa. The drain this fever-death rate has been on us in West Africa during these past 200 years has been too heavy for us to support and prosper, so we have not prospered there as we have in places where the death-toll has been lower. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, first among all British statesmen, recognised this evil, and set himself about remedying it in a practical way, and in this effort he has been grandly supported by the merchants of Liverpool and Manchester, and by those ladies who have organised the Colonial Nursing Association. I wish I could tell you one-half of what I know about Mr. Chamberlain's action in improving and strengthening the medical and nursing service, the forces to fight Death, our greatest enemy in the tropics; about the way he established the School for the study of tropical diseases in London, where calm scientific work could be carried on, and called in, to aid him in his endeavour to save white men's lives in the tropics, all the most modern and perfect aid Science could give him. Mr. Chamberlain in this matter has done a grand good thing, and done it nobly, for no one urged it on him, it was done to catch no votes—white men in West Africa have none. It was not done to add to his own reputation or glorification as a statesman; he has given time, thought and labour to it that he could, had he cared for that end, have spent in advertising himself. It was done from humane sympathy alone, and it was done with a grasp of the situation and of the best means to meet it, that in my mind marks Mr. Chamberlain out as a

Statesman who, when he either knows the facts of the case himself, or when he is well and soundly instructed in them, is a man to be trusted up to the hilt as a statesman, and honoured as a man. For away behind the public loss we suffer in the tropics by the loss of men's lives from fever, there is a wilderness of sorrow, poverty and gloom up here, peopled by widows and orphans, mothers and fathers, sisters and friends, who mourn their dead and have to battle on with the world unaided and uncheered by the men who have died of fever far away; these people owe to Mr. Chamberlain, and those working with him in this cause, a deep gratitude,—a gratitude they cannot pay him down for. To speak as the fly to the Buffalo, Mr. Chamberlain and myself have lived a sort of cat and dog life in West Africa's domestic affairs on the subject of the hut tax in Sierra Leone; probably we shall continue to live that life to the end of our respective earthly terms. What Mr. Chamberlain's opinion of me is I do not know, I expect it has blue lightnings in it and smells of sulphur. I, as aforesaid, believe in him and trust him when he knows the facts of the case, and the facts of the native population case he does not know, and will not till he calls in science to that too. But that is not his blame, nor the blame of any single white man mixed up in it; it is the blame of the system, by which I do not mean the British Constitution but that system that is in the British Constitution, without having any British Constitution in it, the Crown Colony system. I will not detain you on the Crown Colony system, for I have dealt with it elsewhere.[1]

Now, as regards the nature of the country a few things have to be considered. Take the map of Africa, draw a pencil line along longitude 12° down to the Equator—for natural history you have to draw it down longitude 30°, but politically longitude 12° will serve. Well, to the west of that line you will have the region we are dealing with to-night. Along the northern shores of the continent—the Mediter-

[1] Supra, pp. 256–358.

ranean seaboard—you have a corn-bearing and generally fertile and semi-fertile region; to the south its fertility fades away into the desert of Sahara; south of that, again, you come to a semi-fertile region, the Western Soudan, its fertility depends largely on the River Niger Jouiba, which, like the Nile, floods at certain seasons of the year and fertilises its circumjacent lands; to the south of the valley of the Niger, again, you get a semi-desert, then semi-fertile region, and, finally, to the south of that you get a very heavily forested country whose seaboard faces the Gulf of Guinea. This band of forest, in which our possessions Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast lie, is the richest band of forest in the world, but it is only a narrow band, its eastern termination is in our Colony Lagos; there is a sort of wedge of more open country with dense forests here and there, coming down from the Sahara to the sea in the Lagos colony; to the east you strike the mangrove swamps of the Niger delta, and behind them you get to the east the northern face of the great forest belt of Africa. In the heart of the forest belt in West Africa we have no possessions, because there is nothing British between Calabar and Walfisch Bay, down far south. If any of you are interested in details concerning this region's trade and possibilities I must refer you to Dr. Austin Freeman's *Ashantee and Jaman*, M. le Captain Benger's great book in French on the Niger and the Gulf of Guinea, and an article by Mr. Edwards in the April number of the *Fortnightly Review* for 1898, and M. Dubois' book on Timbuctoo, and such like things.

I now turn to that highly dangerous and inflammable subject, the native African population, feeling just as I felt when dealing with my last crocodile, namely, just as frightened as when dealing with my first. I have always been very careful in dealing with this subject, yet you behold in me the warrior of a hundred fights, quiet and inoffensive as my remarks have ever been. I have had down on me at one and the same time a most distinguished major, a bishop, and a medical missionary, all able, energetic men, too, every one of them, with a

literary gift in full-going order; to say nothing of side fights with hut tax champions, and a Liberian gentleman who went for me the other day because he said he believed I regarded the Lord Mayor of London as superior to a certain eminent African scholar. I have the greatest respect for the Lord Mayor of London, though I do *not* know him, and for the African gentleman in question, though I *do*; and I would not dream of doing a thing like that which would hurt both their respective feelings. Of course the reason for my getting into hot water is that I have said that the African is *different*, which is a statement I stick to; it is that word *different* that gets me into trouble every time: had I said he was inferior I should have had a ready-made section of opinion to go with me; had I said he was superior, I should have had another ready-made section of opinion to go with me; but I said *different*, and I said also and say so still, that the African you have got in your minds up here, that you are legislating for and spending millions on trying to improve, doesn't exist; *your* African is a fancy African.

This has had of course the tendency to combine both the aforesaid sections of ready-made opinion against me, and they went together and found out that I had ancestors connected with the slave trade; well, I *had*, and am not ashamed of it. It has been an elegant fight, conducted on my opponents' side with the greatest courtesy, and *they have won*. You keep your fancy African and I wish you joy of him, but I grieve more bitterly than I can say for the real African that does exist and suffers for all the mistakes you make in dealing with him through a dream-thing, the fiend-child African of your imagination. Above all, I grieve for the true Negro people whose home is in West Africa from Gambia to Cameroon, the finest of all the pure African races, who trusted you and thought you were his Big friend, and who now does not do so to one-half the extent he did four years ago. I will not go so far as Homer and call him "the blameless Ethiopian," for he is an uncommon shrewd man with notions about rights of

property and so on, but he is, taken all round, gentle, kindly, hospitable, willing, cheerful, and strong. If he were only white or yellow even, if he only *always* wore even 31*s.* 6*d.* suits of clothes, if he only had a written literature, all his iniquities would not have the horror to you they have now. It is an emotional horror which it is no use arguing with, but which is no part of a healthy Imperialist spirit.

Lord Rosebery says we are a wasteful people; certainly we have wasted a lot of fine stuff in West Africa, white and black: another of our statesmen once said we built a wall of white corpses around the African coast to suppress the over-sea slave trade. It looks now as if we should build a similar wall to suppress pagan practices and the internal slave trade, but what is the use of talking? Only remember it is not war that I hate there or anywhere, it is waste. Many a war in West Africa like Sir Gilbert Carter's against the Jebus, like Sir George Goldie's against the Fuloani, were good and necessary wars, and they were well-done wars too; but those other wars arising from amateur finance and ignorance are mere waste. The sooner you get rid of amateur finance and ignorance the better; if you cannot, if it is impracticable, you are not fit to manage the British Empire in so naturally difficult a region as tropical Africa, with its great native population and great unhealthiness for whites. *But it is no use talking.* Well, these true Negro people of West Africa are a strongly marked race. As aforesaid, their home country is from Gambia to Cameroon: there is evidence to show that at one period they extended further into the western Soudan than they now do; how far they extended to the east as rulers we do not know, but we have reason to suspect from classic literature that they were in immediate touch both with Carthage and Egypt. Two great factors have plainly come into play in their history, namely, the Berber and European races; they have both, from a national standpoint, treated the true Negro on financial-religious lines. The Berber has raided him for slaves, the European bought them from the Berber, commonly called the

Arab, but a mixture of Arab and Berber and negro in West and Central Africa, has employed the true negro slave in developing the East, the Europeans in developing the West, the Americas. They both know he is the finest labour material in the world for the tropics, and they both, well knowing that their respective religions, and the common humane feeling, do not approve of the goings on in connection with slavery, gloss them over with the excuse that it does the African good, because it gives him a chance of saving his soul. You know Boswell says in the life of Dr. Johnson regarding the slave trade, "that to abolish this trade would be to shut the gates of mercy on mankind." Nowadays the European, pre-eminently the English, have thrown from them this bit of humbug, and for getting rid of it you have to thank those noble missionaries of ours who have gone for their religion to Africa, for that religion alone, not for the sake of making money out of the African at the same time; they have taken away this excuse that to convert the African you must export him from Africa. But humbug is hard to kill. Therefore now the party that is anxious for cheap African labour, being cut off by the missionaries' action of giving Christianity without asking money and labour in exchange for it, from sheltering themselves under the religious excuse, have gone and got another; it is called "elevating the African in the plane of civilisation." It is hard on civilisation, just as it was on religion, to be used as a cloak for things, but it takes people in who would not permit the open slave trade; but if people will look into it, I think this civilisation cloak will be stripped off. First, think what this word civilisation means. In its higher sense it means a compound thing, not a mixture of a certain state of perfection in arts and crafts, and it means a thing we have no word for in English, we have to go to Germany for it; there it is called *Bildung*, and the whole thing we call civilisation is called *Kultur*, and a far better word it is too. Professor Sully in last month's *Fortnightly* has an admirable paper on it. Well, we *may* by

our present system of dealing with the African under the guise of elevating him in the plane of civilisation, advance him in the arts and crafts department, but in the *Bildung*, the improvement of the man's mind and soul, we are retarding his development, not aiding it. Now, in connection with this getting African labour under the guise of great principles like Religion and Civilisation there is a most important thing to be considered from the political point of view. Wearing either cloak, however falsely, brings with it ultimate consequences. In the case of wearing the cloak Religion a difficult position has been created in Church matters. It is a difficult position, but one I pretend to no opinion on. In the case of wearing the cloak Civilisation in dealing with the African there is being created a very difficult and dangerous position to the State, and one most of us have a strong opinion on, particularly those who have studied the Negro problem in America. You have already in South Africa laid the foundation for a similar problem by granting the vote to the black population; you are now laying the foundation for it in West Africa by directly taxing the natives. If you tax a man or his land that man, according to the British Constitution, must have a vote. I have an unbounded belief in the British Constitution, and believe its principles are so near truth that they will have their way. One main principle of our constitution is "no taxation without representation," and direct representation of the native we must have if things are to be well with us and them; but *not* this vote, this jury system and vestrymanism, which is a development of the British Constitution suitable for *us*—in fact, our local government system. It is not their local government system. You don't give them representation by giving them our parliamentary franchise which you cannot let them use; you would give them representation by representing, in our councils concerning their interests, their own local government system, one developed by the genius of the people and adapted to their local environment. This is, of course,

the *rule-the-native-on-native-lines* doctrine which is, I believe, the right one, but I am told it is impossible, because the rule of the African chief is so bad. I am aware of the nature of that rule in some districts, and from what I know I say the harm of it is exaggerated; the harm done when that rule is broken down and the Hausa policeman is put to rule over chaos is worse. The native state-form can be developed, and it is healthy; the other is a disease, and the more you have of it the worse for all parties concerned, barring the criminal native classes. Burglary as a profession is in a far more prosperous state now in our coast towns in West Africa than it has ever been. I do not believe you are elevating the African in the plane of civilisation when you turn him into a criminal or a clerk (you can do without either), or when you produce so large a percentage of these non-marketable commodities as you now do. I do not deny you can really elevate him with a proper method. Your intentions are good, your men are good, the British Constitution is good, but it is the method whereby these things are now co-ordinated that is bad, and that wastes white endeavours. This method, if it must be preserved, should be preserved, not at Westminster, but at that valuable institution the British Museum at Bloomsbury.

The form of government native to the true negroes is a Democracy with a figure head, the Chief. In certain places under local strain of political conditions, as in Ashantee and Dahomey and Benin, the figure-head has been turned into something like an hereditary absolute king; some of the kings of those places have been good men, some bad, but all have been dominated by the local religion, some more than others; some have, as it were, gone in for the Inquisition as fiercely as Philip of Spain, some for witch-burning like our James, some have not; but absolute monarchs they never are, only the custodians of the tribal power and wealth at the time being, none of them legally having the right to alienate these things or use them for their own private ends—all of them existing only just so long

as the tribal Secret Society saw fit. The two most native forms of the state are the House system of Calabar, which I have already described,[1] and the system whereby the Kru men are governed. In the Kru system you have no king, and the democracy is divided into three classes, or rather three ages of free men. The most powerful class is the Gueckbade, or old men, it has two presidents, the Bodio and the Worabanah. The Bodio, who is really a fetish or religious king, rules in times of peace, the Worabanah in times of war; the Bodio's advantages consist in the right to wear an iron ring round his ankle, be obeyed, receive a small toll from the community, and be feared and respected as long as things go well with the community in the main; when they do not the Bodio can be deposed, and it is disgraceful to be a deposed Bodio, and moreover even when the gods are with him, and trade and agriculture flourish, his life is not one of unalloyed calm and splendour, for his house is sanctuary and a man whose house is open night and day for all men and women passing from summary justice—has no domestic comfort worth speaking of in West Africa. The Worabanah is, I believe, a forerunner of a secular king; given enough war he would undoubtedly turn into a king. Next in grade to the Gueckbade class come the military Sedibo, the middle-aged men—practically they rule the state, but under the right of veto from the Gueckbade. The Sedibo have also two presidents, the Ibadio and the Tibawah; they are equivalent in function to the Bodio and Worabanah; one is a religious person who looks after military affairs in times of peace, the other is entirely secular and takes charge in times of war. Next in grade to the Sedibo are the Kurbo. These are the young men and the Kruboys, all men known in West Africa as the underworkers in all hard work, as seamen, servants, stewards' helpers, in anything but clerking; they have to go and work and get money and what they call learn sense, until they have enough of these things, and are

[1] Supra, pp. 398, 399.

old enough to go back to their country and settle down as Sedibo. The young Kurbo have at home a roughish time of it, their only friend is their mother, and they have to work at home as well as abroad, for no slaves are kept by the Kru people; so the women and the Kurbo do it for the Sedibo and Gueckbade of Kru country.

The Secret Society affair is too intricate for me to enter fully into here. Briefly, the African has a sort of mania for secret societies; he gets up one for any little job he has on hand, it's his way, like the Chinaman's. Some of the African secret societies are good, some bad, some merely so-so; some are equivalent to your Freemasonry, some to your Hooligan gangs, some to your Antediluvian Buffaloes and Ancient Shepherds, some to your Burial Clubs. The tribal secret societies, like Purroh, Egbo, Oru, Idiong, etc., are admirable engines of government. Of course when inspired by a bad motive they are a nuisance, because powerful, but the machine as a machine for the people is splendid; it can tackle a tyrannous chief, keep women in order, and even regulate pigs and chickens, as nothing else has been able to in West Africa. In fact I have never seen anything that as a machine the tribal secret, could not, I believe, successfully tackle. In dealing with these secret societies in West Africa may I ask you to remember the words of Lieutenant-General Sir Andrew Clarke, that statesman to whom the Empire owes so much in the Straits Settlements. In 1873 he was sent out to put right the state of affairs in the Malay Peninsula, a state of affairs our Colonial Office very properly disapproved of, and I should like you to read carefully his remarks recently published in Vol. I. of the British Empire Series. It was Chinese secret societies that were being a nuisance when Sir Andrew stepped in to tidy things up, and he says: "The main evil is the secrecy observed in the deliberations and proceedings of these societies. Try and suppress them altogether, and you will drive them deeper below the surface and render them really dangerous. On the

other hand, recognise them as long as they keep within the confines of the law, insist as far as possible on open meetings and publicity of accounts, and then you will find them a powerful lever ready to your hand. You will be able to hold the leaders responsible for illegality; you may even manipulate the secret society for your own ends. This was the course pursued with success in the case of the Malay States, and I am indebted to the chief of the Chinese Secret Societies for support readily accorded as soon as they understood the principles upon which my action was based." These words are not the words of a mere student like myself, they are the words of a man who has done what he recommends and found it possible to carry out, with the sanction of our Colonial Office when it had a Sir Andrew Clarke man as an official. I assure you in the great law-god societies of the true Negro people, in Parroh, Oru, Egbo, Idiong, and Belli, you have a lever ready to your hand; you want the hand of a Sir Andrew Clarke man to use it, and that is all. I know you will say that these secret societies have horrible rites, and so on: if any one can give any details of those rites they will be very interesting to us anthropologists. I am certain the Anthropological Institute will give every attention. If you will cite me one sound case where cannibalism or human sacrifice is an essential rite in a law-god negro tribal society, I will retract what I say in their favour. I have studied these societies; I am in possession of fairly complete knowledge of the initiatory rites of three of them. I know men acquainted with ten other societies, men whose word I can take, and their information is practically the same as my own, namely that those rites essentially consist in a series of oath-takings as you pass from grade to grade, oaths binding the secret more and more closely on to the man passing through the grades, binding it to him with terrible threats of what will happen to him if he reveal it to any but a fellow of the craft. Each grade gives him a certain amount of instruction in the native law; each grade gives him a certain function in carrying out the law, and finally when he has passed

through *all* the grades, which few men do, when he has finally sworn the greatest oath of all, when he knows all the society's heart's secret, that secret is "I am what I am"—the one word. The teaching of that word is law, order, justice, morality. Why the *one word* teaches it the man who has reached the innermost heart of the secret society does not know, but he knows two things, one, that there is a law god, and the other that, so says the wisdom of our ancestors, his will must be worked or evil will come: so in his generation he works to keep the young people straight—to keep the people from over-fishing the lagoons, to keep the people from cutting palm nuts, and from digging yams at wrong seasons. He does these things by putting Purroh, or Oru, or Egbo on them; Purroh, Oru and Egbo and Idiong are things the people fear. I daresay there is a good deal to be said against the law-god society, but I ask you to face the social situation. There are bad Africans, lots of them, criminal Africans, vicious minded, sensual Africans, and there are flighty Africans of both sexes simply galore, "in an exceeding plentie." Now to make things go well, those people must be kept in order: crush down your chief, crush down your secret law god society, and what happens? What can you put in their place? A good, clean-hearted, well-intentioned white man, acting through a miscellaneous native official staff, and under these the criminal and vicious population, forming themselves into murder and burglary clubs, harassing the respectable African citizen out of his property and wits, and leading the frivolous down the road to ruin. You have therefore the choice of purifying and developing the native system of government, the chief and the secret society, or of creating a chaos, a thing it pleases you to call "elevating the African in the plane of civilisation"—or you may say sadly, "we know it is bad, but we could not help it."

You must not think I am speaking merely with an ethnologist's natural love for a savage thing in saying

what I have said about the tribal Secret Society, neither, I pray you, think I never hit up against a tribal Secret Society, and so cannot sympathise with those white men who do. On the contrary I had twenty-four hours of the very hottest brand with one, a big one that rules the Iglawa. I was then staying with my lamented friend the Rev. Hermann Jacot of the Mission Evangelique—one of the noblest spirits ever given to Africa; one of the white race's greatest ornaments, and the black race's truest friends; he was ill, not with the illness he died of, but ill, and his devoted wife was most anxious about him, and also anxious with him about news that had come up, that at a village down the Orimbo vungo, there were a man and woman about to be killed by order of Ukukar. I offered to do what I could, and asked for instructions how to act. There were two things one could do. One was send for the French Government gun-boat. Against that line of action there were two considerations; one was, that that gun-boat wasn't there, it was elsewhere far off on business, another was that Hermann Jacot never once, though living among some of the wildest and hottest of African people, the Bafangh, had had one single native village burnt at his request, so the mailed fist-line was out of it altogether in this matter. I was a person of no authority there, still the thing had to be done, for Mrs. Jacot said, "You must bring those two people here or the worry of it will kill Hermann." Women are very unreasonable; so I went down to the village, and I had the aforesaid hot time. I brought the two back in a canoe and they settled at the Mission Station. As to how I did it, well, I did not take the Missionary's name in vain, or the French Government's. I worked it on my own responsibility through the head man of the tribal Secret Society, by talking over points of his law, and by adding to my bill with the local traders. I got criticism, very sharp criticism, from the Missionary, for associating with pagan practices, but I got none from his wife, and this is not the only case by many where I have been able to do a thing by means of the tribal Secret Society.

As for the nature of the other Societies, not the Tribal Secret, their functions are varied. There is a Society, as I have said, for most things. There is one I know at Qualbo, which Mr. Fitzgerald Marriot, an authority on Secret Societies in West Africa, gave a description of at the British Association, for protecting the goods of widows and orphans; there are Societies which I know of, and many others, which, disguised as leopards or crocodiles, murder for murder's sake, or for the sake of getting certain parts of the human body for fetish purposes. Yet infinitely varied as their functions are, African Secret Societies can all be grouped under five heads. First, there is the Great Tribal Secret Society which has two sides, one for men, one for women; all free boys and girls have to be educated by it. The head woman of the woman's side is allowed to be present at the meetings of the man's side, there is a separate path made for the Yamama, for example, to enter the lodge of Purroh; she is not entitled to speak; she is supposed to be invisible to all but the Sopawaye, the head man of the Purroh Society, and when she dies he buries her; though there is no other necessary relationship between them. Similarly the head of the man's Society knows about the ladies' affairs. This Society, as I have said, is the law-god Society. In the case of Purroh there are known to be two kinds of Purroh; one Dr. Cole terms State Purroh, that is equivalent to the ordinary law-god Society, and similar to Oru and Idiong, while the other he calls Securing Purroh. Here I respectfully think he has got the wrong word, and I should suggest that, in place of Securing Purroh, we should call it Protective Purroh, which is what Dr. Cole really means by Securing. The function of this Purroh is mutual protection among members, and I think it is a separate Society from State or Law Purroh, though I am not yet justified in being sure on that point. Still the other law societies are not so divided, but there is a separate society for mutual protection in all districts. The second group are those societies Dr. Cole classes as Mystical, and it's a fair name for them, though rather too

fine a one, for half the time their mysticism consists in the concoction of charms that will make a householder sleep through a smart burglary on his premises, and in making people whom members wish removed go and kill themselves. Some of you may have read Mr. Wills's fine story "The Purroh Man." Well, that man who put the charm on was not a Purroh man, leastways he did not put the charm on by Purroh, he put it on by Kufong. Of course he may have been a Purroh man as well, only gone wrong, like an M.P. directing a bogus company. As a Purroh man he had no right to do such a thing; Purroh goes for all those mystical societies like a cat for a mouse, and Kufong is the greatest of them. Then the third group is the Medical Societies, like Gojambol; they never practise witchcraft, and they have knowledge of many remedies, many of them valuable. Most valuable is their secret medicine for snake bites. Then fourth, there are the Slave Societies; no slave can become an Egbo, Purroh or Oru man, so he has a Purroh or Oru equivalent of his own. The most notable of these slave societies are the blood boys of Calabar, who act in checking oppression on slaves. Fifth, there are the vast mass of Temporary Societies, societies that only exist for carrying out a certain purpose, and when that is over fall apart.

I have now given you an ethnologist's view of our West African Empire. Do not think that we, who study such things as tribal organisation, secret societies and Fetish religions, hold that our path is an easy one to follow, for those things are difficult to understand, and in studying them exceeding caution is necessary, for the opportunities the material affords you for making mistakes are numerous. I have made, in my time, many out there, but I have been so conscious of my duty to science that all material I was not quite sure was soundly sifted, I have kept to myself. The most terrifying mistake I ever made I made when I was pottering about Mount Njawki, beetle hunting, &c. One afternoon when walking down a bush path alone, I found myself facing on a little open space seven men all got up in the

most extraordinary costumes imaginable—hoods made of beads and bits of cloth, and mantles made of strips of skin and cloth, and having beads, shells and hawks-bills on them for trimming. My heart went into my mouth and my mind went into my heels, for, oh! thinks I, here's one of those precious men secret societies in full session. I knew that it was death for an uninitiated native man or any native woman to see such a thing; what it might be for me I did not know—I did not want to. I executed what I hoped would be a masterly retreat, full of the hope that, as they all seemed sitting sound asleep, they had not seen me. I soon heard the phit-phat of a man's running feet coming after me, and knew retreat was no good; so I turned and faced him. The moment I did so he stood in his tracks; and I said, "My esteemed Ethiopian acquaintance, what do you want?" He said no word, but respectfully beckoned in silence to me to follow him. Well, there was no policeman round there; you cannot hail a cab and drive away from things in the Okanda country; so I went back down the path with that extraordinarily dressed strange young man. When we reached the other pack of dandies they spoke not a word but saluted respectfully, and off we all went, in an Indian file procession, down the forest path ahead. My thoughts ran to the tune of "Oh, to be in England now it's spring-time there," and my companions made things all the more cheerful by now and again uttering strange cries, long clucks, melancholy whines and howls, but they spoke not one word. After going thus for about a mile, we came to another little open space. Down my companions sat again and reassumed the sleeping attitude I first found them in. I stood with my back against a tree, wishing that Professor Köhler of Berlin, Professor Tylor, Professor Frazer, the whole of the Anthropological Institute Council, and the president and secretaries, were enjoying this admirable opportunity of study, instead of merely their servant—me; and I wondered what was going to happen next. I soon saw. We were not a secret society,

we were just merely out hunting monkeys. The way the thing worked was this: monkeys are people in whose breasts rages continuous war between curiosity and caution; my black friends know it, so of course, by getting themselves up uncommon queer, they attract monkeyian curiosity, and then by pretending to be asleep, they take monkeyian caution; so after they had sat still about twenty minutes, or, as I felt, some 2,000 years, down the monkeys came, clinging to each other for better protection, intent on investigation. Then, from under the mantles of my companions came a flight of arrows; three monkeys dropped, and as the rest fled jabbering away, another flight of arrows brought down two more, and then my companions threw off their fancy dresses and explained, as they collected the game, that they could not speak before because it would have given the whole show away—monkeys, according to them, well knowing a human language, and success depending on our party not being taken for human; and they further explained, I am sure with no uncivil intention, that as I was quite the very queerest object they had personally ever seen, they thought I was a heaven-sent addition to a monkey hunt. Well, if I had known that earlier I might have spent a more comfortable afternoon.

Then again I was once party to another mistake arising from want of detail knowledge, not from want of good intention. It was when I was staying with a Reverend Mother Superior in Ka Congo. She was a person I have an unfounded love for and faith in, and she used to sleep at night in a fine, wild country, with the door of her little room ajar, so that if any one in trouble wanted her aid they could come in and wake her. I shared her room. I was woke up one night by an awful pow-wow, in which the reverend mother was evidently taking an active part. I flew off the bed and took an active part too. The demon-thing we fought with hurt like mad when it hit you, which was all the time, except when it was bombarding the other lady, the furniture and the house walls; however, at a lucky

moment in the fray, we froze on to the enemy simultaneously, and, with a terrific effort, cast it out of the door into the night and slammed the door and bolted it, while the enemy bombarded the outside. Having no electric light or gas round that way, we had an earnest search for the candle and the matches. When we got a light and had agreed that our enemy was an extra sized wild boar, not a leopard, as we first thought, we decided, as he was still attacking the house, to look at him. There were two little windows; I held the candle out of one, the reverend mother put her head out of the other, and said in a tone of deep feeling and remonstrance, "Billy, oh, Billy, was it you?" Well, it was Billy the mission goat, and our intellectual honours were even, for he, when he got in and roused the reverend mother, plainly mistook her for the prince of darkness and went for him as a mission goat should, and when I joined in he evidently took me for another devil; it's very easy to make mistakes on the West Coast of Africa, but I assure you the only good of them is teaching you not to do it again and to make as few as possible, for it's a difficult region. From an imperial standpoint mistakes made there are waste, to get them right you will have to spend blood-money that might be better employed, say in China, and you will get here a lot of nervous old parties who will sententiously say we are over-burdened with Empire. We are not; we are over-burdened with our own wastefulness and want of organisation. These things can be cast out of Imperialism—will be cast out of it when we are all Imperialists and not so many mere lookers-on at the British Empire, as if it were a stage play to clap or hiss at. Not only in times of war, but in times of peace we all ought to strive to make our Empire what it should be—sound financially, and the representative in this world of liberty, justice, representation in council, to all men.

I thank you for your toleration of me. I know I owe it to the name I bear; I know I owe all that is good in

me, to the blood of my ancestors; my Imperialism is their Imperialism, rather out of fashion of late years, though they practically did much to make a great Empire for you to take pride in, they and their old comrades the merchant adventurers of England. It is merely natural that I should, as has been said, have a strange taste for West Coast traders. They are the representatives of the old merchant adventurers, men for whom Sir Francis Drake, of honourable memory, went out and fought, greatly to the making of the power of this realm; and it is natural I should like negroes. Sir Francis was always "exceedingly gentle to these people," and he burnt a Spanish town, and a big one at that, just because it had killed his favourite negro boy. I like to live at peace within my own house, so I know it is safer for me to stick to the old Imperialism of Drake with its rigid beliefs in keeping your own honour clean. If I were to depart from that and preach certain doctrines in modern Imperialism, it's a warm reception I should get from my family and the old merchant adventurers when I arrive at where they are held now to dwell—Fiddler's Green. Good-bye and fare you well, for I am homeward bound.

APPENDIX I

TRADE GOODS USED IN THE EARLY TRADE WITH AFRICA AS GIVEN BY BARBOT AND OTHER WRITERS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

"THOSE used in trade by the Senga Company of Senegal at St. Lewis and Goree and their dependent factories of Rufisco, Camina, Juala, Gamboa (Gambia), *circa* 1677.

"For the convenience of trade between the French at the Senega and the natives, all European goods are reduced to a certain standard, viz., hides, bars, and slaves, for the better understanding whereof I give some instances. One bar of iron is reckoned as worth 8 hides, 1 cutlace the same, 1 cluster of bugles weighing 4½ lbs. as 3 hides, 1 bunch of false pearls 20 hides, 1 bunch of Gallet 4 hides, 1 hogshead of brandy from 150 to 160 hides. Bugles are very small glass beads, and mostly made at Venice, and sold in strings and clusters. At Goree the same goods bear not quite so good a rate, as, for example, a hogshead of brandy brings but 140 hides, 1 lb. of gunpowder 2 hides. 1 piece of eight 5 hides, 1 oz. of coral 7 or 8 hides, 1 oz. of crystal 1 hide, an ounce of yellow amber 2 hides.

"A slave costs from 12 to 14 bars of iron, and sometimes 16, at Porto d'Ali 18 to 20, and much more at Gamboa, according to the number of ships, French, English, Portuguese, and Dutch, which happen to be

there at the same time. The bar of iron is rated at 6 hides.

"Besides these, which are the most staple commodities, the French import common red, blue, and scarlet cloth, silver and brass rings or bracelets, chains, little bells false crystal, ordinary and coarse hats, *Dutch* pointed knives, pewter dishes, silk sashes with false gold and silver fringes, blue serges, *French* paper, steels to strike fire, *English* sayes, *Roan* linen, salamporis, platillies, blue callicoes, taffeties, chintzs, cawris or shells, by the French called *bouges*, coarse north, red cords called *Bure*, lines, shoes, fustian, red worsted caps, worsted fringe of all colours, worsted of all kinds in skeins, basons of several sizes, brass kettles, yellow amber, maccatons, that is, beads of two sorts, pieces of eight of the old stamp, some pieces of 28 sols value, either plain or gilt, Dutch cutlaces, straight and bow'd, and clouts, galet, martosdes, two other sorts of beads of which the blacks make necklaces for women, white sugar, musket balls, iron nails, shot, white and red frize, looking-glasses in plain and gilt frames, cloves, cinnamon, scissors, needles, coarse thread of sundry colours, but chiefly red, yellow, and white, copper bars of a pound weight, ferrit, men's shirts, coarse and fine, some of them with bone lace about the neck, breast, and sleeves, *Haerlem* cloths, *Coasveld* linen, *Dutch* mugs, white and blue, *Leyden* rugs or blankets, *Spanish* leather shoes, brass trumpets, round padlocks, glass bottles with a tin rim at the mouth, empty trunks or chests, and a sort of bugle called Pezant, but above all, as was said above, great quantities of brandy, and iron in bars; particularly at Goree the company imports 10,000 or more every year of those which are made in their province of *Brittany*, all short and thin, which is called in London narrow flat iron, or half flat iron in Sweden, but each bar shortened or cut off at one end to about 16 to 18 inches, so that about 80 of these bars weigh a ton English. It is to be observed that such voyage-iron, as it is called in London, is the only sort and size used throughout all Nigritia, Guinea, and West Ethiopia in the way of trade.

Lastly, a good quantity of Cognac brandy, both in hogsheads and rundlets, single and double, the double being 8, the single 4 gallons.

"The principal goods the French have in return for these commodities from the *Moors* and *Blacks* are slaves, gold dust, elephants' teeth, beeswax, dry and green hides, gumarabic, ostrich feathers, and several other odd things, as ambergris, cods of musk, tygers' and goats' skins, provisions, bullocks, sheep, and teeth of sea-horses (hippopotamus)."

The main trade of the Senga or Senegal Company seems to have been gum and slaves in these regions. Gold dust they got but little of in Senegal, the Portuguese seeming to have been the best people to work that trade. The ivory was, according to Barbot, here mainly that picked up in woods, and scurfy and hollow, or, as we should call it, kraw kraw ivory, the better ivory coming from the Qua Qua Ivory Coast. Hides, however, were in the seventeenth century, as they are now, a regular line in the trade of Senegambia, and the best hides came from the Senegal River, the inferior from Rufisco and Porto d'Ali. Barbot says: "They soak or dye these hides as soon as they are flayed from the beast, and presently expose them to the air to *dry*; which, in my opinion, is the reason why, wanting the true first seasoning, they are apt to corrupt and breed worms if not looked after and often beaten with a stick or wand, and then laid up in very dry store houses." I have no doubt Barbot is right, and that there is not enough looking after done to them nowadays, so that the worms have their own way too much.

The African hides were held in old days inferior to those shipped from South America, both in thickness and size, and were used in France chiefly to cover boxes with; but in later times, I am informed, they were sought after and split carefully into two slices, serving to make kid for French boots.

"The French reckoned the trade of the Senga Company to yield 700 or 800 per cent. advance upon invoice of their goods, and yet their Senga Company,

instead of thriving, has often brought a noble to ninepence. Nay, it has broken twice in less than thirty years, which must be occasioned by the vast expense they are at in Europe, Africa, and America, besides ill-management of their business; but this is no more than the common fate of Dutch and English African Companies, as well as that to make rather loss than profit because their charges are greater than the trade can bear, in maintaining so many ports and other forts and factories in Africa, which devour all the profits." I quote this of Barbot as an interesting thing, considering the present state of West Coast Colonial finance.

GAMBIA TRADE, 1678.

"The factors of the English Company at James Fort, and those of the French at Albreda and other places, drive a very great trade in that country all along the river in brigantines, sloops, and canoes, purchasing—

"Elephants' teeth, beeswax, slaves, pagnos (country-made clothes), hides, gold and silver, and goods also found in the Sengal trade.

"In exchange they give the *Blacks*—

"Bars of iron, drapery of several sorts, woollen stuffs and cloth, linen of several sorts, coral and pearl, brandy or rum in anchors, firelocks, powder, ball and shot, Sleysiger linen, painted callicoes of gay colours, shirts, gilded swords, ordinary looking-glasses, salt, hats, *Roan* caps, all sorts and sizes of bugles, yellow amber, rock crystal, brass pans and kettles, paper, brass and pewter rings, some of them gilt, box and other combs, *Dutch* earthen cans, false ear-rings, satalaes, and sabres or cutlaces, small iron and copper kettles, *Dutch* knives called *Bosmans*, hooks, brass trumpets, bills, needles, thread and worsted of several colours." This selection practically covered the trade up to Sierra Leone.

SIERRA LEONE, 1678.

"Exports.—Elephants' teeth, slaves, santalum wood a little gold, much beeswax with some pearls, crystal, long peppers, ambergris, &c. The ivory here was considered the best on the West Coast, being, says Barbot, very white and large, have had some weighing 80 to 100 lbs., at a very modest rate 80 lbs. of ivory for the value of five livres *French* money, in coarse knives and other such toys. The gold purchased in Sierra Leone, the same authority states, comes from Mandinga and other remote countries towards the Niger or from South Guinea by the River Mitomba. The trade selection was: French brandy or rum, iron bars, white callicoes, Sleysiger linen, brass kettles, earthen cans, all sorts of glass buttons, brass rings or bracelets, bugles and glass beads of sundry colours, brass medals, carrings, *Dutch* knives, *Bosmans*, first and second size, hedging bills and axes, coarse laces, crystal beads, painted callicoes (red) called chintz, oil of olive, small duffels, ordinary guns, muskets and fuzils, gunpowder, musket balls and shot, old sheets, paper, red caps, men's shirts, all sorts of counterfeit pearls, red cotton, narrow bands of silk stuffs or worsted, about half a yard broad for women, used about their waists.

"The proper goods to purchase the cam wood and elephants' teeth in Sherboro' River, are chiefly these:—Brass basons and kettles, pewter basons, and tankards, iron bars, bugles, painted callicoes, *Guinea* stuffs or cloths, *Holland* linen or cloth, muskets, powder, and ball. A ship may in two months time out and home purchase here fifty-six tons of cam wood and four tons of elephants' teeth or more."

The trade selection for the Pepper Coast was practically the same as for Sierra Leone, only less extensive and cheaper in make, and had a special line in white and blue large beads. The main export was Manequette pepper and rice, the latter of which was to be had in great quantity but poor quality at about a halfpenny a pound;

and there was also ivory to be had, but not to so profitable an extent as on the next coast, the Ivory. The same selection of goods was used for the Ivory Coast trade as those above-named, with the addition of Contaccarbe or Contabrode, namely, iron rings, about the thickness of a finger, which the blacks wear about their legs with brass bells, as they do the brass rings or bracelets about their arms in the same manner. The natives here also sold country-made cloths, which were bought by the factors to use in trade in other districts, mainly the Gold Coast; the Ivory Coast cloths come from inland districts, those sold at Cape La Hou are of six stripes, three French ells and a half long, and very fine; those from Corby La Hou of five stripes, about three ells long, and coarser. They also made "clouts" of a sort of hemp, or plant like it, which they dye handsomely, and weave very artificially.

THE GOLD COAST.

This coast has, from its discovery in the 15th century to our own day, been the chief trade region in the Bight of Benin; and Barbot states that the amount of gold sent from it to Europe in his day was £240,000 value per annum.

The trade selection for the Gold Coast trade in the 17th and 18th centuries is therefore very interesting, as it gives us an insight into the manufactures exported by European traders at that time, and of a good many different kinds; for English, French, Portuguese, Dutch, Danes and Brandenburghers were all engaged in the Gold Coast trade, and each took out for barter those things he could get cheapest in his own country.

"The *French* commonly," says Barbot, "carry more brandy, wine, iron, paper, firelocks, &c., than the *English* or *Dutch* can do, those commodities being cheaper in *France*, as, on the other hand, they (the *English* and *Dutch*) supply the Guinea trade with greater quantities of linen, cloth, bugles, copper basons and kettles, wrought pewter, gunpowder, sayes, perpetuanas, chintzs

cawris, old sheets, &c., because they can get these wares from *England* or *Holland*.

"The *French* commonly compose their cargo for the Gold Coast trade to purchase slaves and gold dust; of brandy, white and red wine, ros solis, firelocks, muskets, flints, iron in bars, white and red contecarbe, red frize, looking glasses, fine coral, sarsaparilla, bugles of sundry sorts and colours and glass beads, powder, sheets, tobacco, taffeties, and many other sorts of silks wrought as brocardels, velvets, shirts, black hats, linen, paper, laces of many sorts, shot, lead, musket balls, callicoes, serges, stuffs, &c., besides the other goods for a true assortment, which they have commonly from *Holland*.

"The *Dutch* have *Coesveld* linen, Slezsiger lywat, old sheets, *Leyden* serges, dyed indigo-blue, perpetuanas, green, blue and purple, *Konings-Kleederen*, annabas, large and narrow, made at *Haerlem*; *Cyprus* and *Turkey* stuffs, *Turkey* carpets, red, blue and yellow cloths, green, red and white *Leyden* rugs, silk stuffs blue and white, brass kettles of all sizes, copper basons, *Scotch* pans, barbers' basons, some wrought, others hammered, copper pots, brass locks, brass trumpets, pewter, brass and iron rings, hair trunks, pewter dishes and plates (of a narrow brim), deep porringers, all sorts and sizes of fishing hooks and lines, lead in sheets and in pipes, 3 sorts of *Dutch* knives, *Venice* bugles and glass beads of sundry colours and sizes, sheep skins, iron bars, brass pins long and short, brass bells, iron hammers, powder, muskets, cutlaces, cawris, chintz, lead balls and shot, brass cups with handles, cloths of *Cabo Verdo*, *Qua Qua*, *Ardra* and *Rio Forcada*, blue coral, *alias* akory from Benin, strong waters and abundance of other wares, being near 160 sorts, as a *Dutchman* told me."

I am sorry Barbot broke down just when he seemed going strong with this list, and I was out of breath checking the indent, and said "other wares," but I cannot help it, and beg to say that this is the true assortment for the Gold Coast trade in 1678. The English selection "besides many of the same goods above mentioned have tapseils, broad and narrow

nicanees fine and coarse, many sorts of chintz or *Indian* callicoes printed, tallow, red painting colours, *Canary* wine, sayes, perpetuanas inferior to the *Dutch* and stacked up in painted tillets with the *English* arms, many sorts of white callicoes, blue and white linen, *China* satins, *Barbadoes* rum, other strong waters and spirits, beads of all sorts, buckshaws, *Welsh* plain, boysades, romberges, clouts, gingarus, taffeties, amber, brandy, flower, *Hamburgh* brawls, and white, blue and red chequered linen, narrow *Guinea* stuffs chequered, ditto broad, old hats, purple beads. The *Danes*, *Brandenburghers* and *Portuguese* provide their cargoes in *Holland* commonly consisting of very near the same sort of wares as I have observed the *Dutch* make up theirs, the two former having hardly anything of their own proper to the trade of the Gold Coast besides copper and silver, either wrought or in bullion or in pieces of eight, which are a commodity also there.

"The *Portuguese* have most of their cargoes from *Holland* under the name of *Jews* residing there, and they add some things of the product of *Brasil*, as tobacco, rum, tame cattle, *St. Tomé* cloth, others from *Rio Forcado* and other circumjacent places in the Gulf of Guinea."

USE MADE OF EUROPEAN GOODS BY THE NATIVES OF THE GOLD COAST. BARBOT.

"The broad linen serves to adorn themselves and their dead men's sepulchers within, they also make clouts thereof. The narrow cloth to press palm oil; in old sheets they wrap themselves at night from head to foot. The copper basons to wash and shave. The *Scotch* pans serve in lieu of butchers' tubs when they kill hogs or sheep, from the iron bars the smiths forge out all their weapons, country and household tools and utensils; of frize and perpetuanas, they make girts 4 fingers broad to wear about their waists and hang their sword, dagger, knife and purse of money or gold, which purse they com-

monly thrust between the girdle and their body. They break *Venice* coral into 4 or 5 parts, which afterwards they mould into any form on whetstones and make strings or necklaces which yield a considerable profit; of 4 or 5 ells of *English* or *Leyden* serges, they make a kind of cloak to wrap about their shoulders and stomachs. Of chintz, perpetuanas, printed callicoes, tapsiels and nicanees, are made clouts to wear round their middles. The wrought pewter, as dishes, basons, porringers, &c., serve to eat their victuals out of, muskets, firelocks and cutlaces they use in war; brandy is more commonly spent at their feasts, knives to the same purposes as we use them. With tallow they anoint their bodies from head to toe and even use it to shave their beards instead of soap. Fishing hooks for the same purpose as with us. *Venice* bugles, glass beads and contacarbe, serve all ages and sexes to adorn their heads, necks, arms and legs very extravagantly, being made into strings; and sarsaparilla."—Well, I think I have followed Barbot enough for the present on this point, and turn to his description of the dues the natives have to pay to native authorities on goods bought of Europeans, which amounted to 3 per cent. paid to the proper officers; the kings of the land have at each port town, and even fishes, if it exceeds a certain quantity pays 1 in 5; these duties are paid either in coin or value. Up the inland they pay no duty on river fish but are liable to pay a capitation fee of one shilling per head for the liberty of passing down to the sea-shore either to traffic or attend the markets with their provisions or other sorts of the product of the land, and pay nothing at their return home, goods or no goods, unless they by chance leave their arms in the village, then the person so doing is to pay one shilling.

The collectors account quarterly with their kings, and deliver up what each has received in gold at his respective post, but the fifth part of the fish they collect is sent to the king as they have it, and serves to feed his family.

No fisherman is allowed to dispose of the first fish he has caught till the duty is paid, but are free to do it

aboard ships, which perhaps may be one reason why so many of them daily sell such quantities of their fish to the seafaring men.

Barbot, remarking on this Gold Coast trade, says: "The Blacks of the Gold Coast, having traded with Europeans ever since the 14th century, are very well skilled in the nature and proper qualities of all European wares and merchandize vended there; but in a more particular manner since they have so often been imposed on by the Europeans, who in former ages made no scruple to cheat them in the quality, weight and measures of their goods which at first they received upon content, because they say it would never enter into their thoughts that white men, as they call the Europeans, were so base as to abuse their credulity and good opinion of us. But now they are perpetually on their guard in that particular, examine and search very narrowly all our merchandize, piece by piece, to see each the quality and measure contracted for by samples; for instance, if the cloth is well made and strong, whether dyed at *Haerlem* or *Leyden*—if the knives be not rusty—if the basons, kettles, and other utensils of brass and pewter are not cracked or otherwise faulty or strong enough at the bottom. They measure iron bars with the sole of the foot—they tell over the strings of contacarbel, taste and prove brandy, rum or other liquors, and will presently discover whether it is not adulterated with fresh or salt water or any other mixture, and in point of French brandy will prefer the brown colour in it. In short they examine everything with as much prudence and ability as any European can do.

"The goods sold by *English* and *Dutch*, *Danes*, *Brandenburghers*, &c., ashore, out of these settlements are generally about 25 per cent. dearer to the Blacks than they get aboard ships in the Roads; the supercargoes of the ships commonly falling low to get the more customers and make a quicker voyage, for which reason the forts have very little trade with the Blacks during the summer season, which fills the coast with goods by the great concourse of ships at that time from several

ports of Europe; and as the winter season approaches most of them withdraw from the coast, and so leave elbow room for the fort factors to trade in their turn during that bad season.

"In the year 1682 the gold trade yielded hardly 45 per cent. to our French ships, clear of any charges; but that might be imputed to the great number of trading ships of several European nations which happened to be at that time on the coast, whereof I counted 42 in less than a month's time: had the number been half as great that trade would have appeared 60 per cent. or more, and if a cargo were properly composed it might well clear 70 per cent. in a small ship sailing with little charge, and the voyage directly home from this coast not to exceed 7 or 8 months out and home, if well managed."

These observations of Barbot's are alike interesting and instructive, and in principle applicable to the trade to-day. Do not imagine that Barbot was an early member of the Aborigines' Protection Society when he holds forth on the way in which Europeans "in former ages" basely dealt with the angelic confidence of the Blacks. One of his great charms is the different opinions on general principles, &c., he can hold without noticing it himself: of course this necessitates your reading Barbot right through, and that means 668 pages folio in double column, or something like 2,772 pages of a modern book; but that's no matter, for he is uniformly charming and reeks with information.

Well, there are other places in Barbot where he speaks, evidently with convictions, of "his rascal fellow Black," &c., and gives long accounts of the way in which the black man cheats with false weights and measures, and adulterates; and if you absorb the whole of his information and test it against your own knowledge, and combine it with that of others, I think you will come to the conclusion that it is not necessary for the philanthropist to fidget about the way the European does his side to the trade; the moralist may drop a large and heavy tear on both white and black, but that is all that is required from

him. Unfortunately this is not all that is done nowadays: the black has got hold of the Governmental opinion, and just when he is more than keeping his end up in commercial transactions, he has got the Government to handicap his white fellow-trader with a mass of heavy dues and irritating restrictions, which will end most certainly in stifling trade. My firm conviction is that black and white traders should be left to settle their own affairs among themselves.

SELECTION OF GOODS FOR FIDA OR ONIDAH, CALLED BY THE FRENCH JUIDA, NOW KNOWN AS DAHOMEY, WITH MAIN SEAPORT WHYDAH.

The French opened trade in this district in 1669, when the Dutch were already there.

"The main export of this coast was 'slaves, cotton cloth and blue stones, called agoy or accory, very valuable on the Gold Coast.'

"The best commodity the Europeans can carry thither to purchase is Boejies or cawries, so much valued by the natives, being the current coin there and at Popo, Fida, Benin and other countries further east, without which it is scarcely possible to traffic there. Near to Boejies the flat iron bars for the round or square will not do, and again next to iron, fine long coral, *China* sarcenets, gilt leather, white damask and red, red cloth with large lists, copper bowls or cups, brass rings, *Venice* beads or bugles of several colours, agalis, gilded looking glasses, *Leyden* serges, platilles, linen morees, salampores, red chints, broad and narrow tapsiels, blue canequins, broad gunez and narrow (a sort of linen), double canequins, French brandy in ankers or half-ankers (the anker being a 16 gallon rundlet), canary and malmsey, black caudebec hats, Italian taffeties, white or red cloth of gold or silver, *Dutch* knives, *Bosmans*, striped armoizins, with white or flowered, gold and silver brocadel, fire-locks, muskets, gunpowder, large beads from *Rouen*,

white flowered sarcenets, *Indian* armorzins and damask napkins, large coral earrings, cutlaces gilded and broad, silk scarfs, large umbrellors, pieces of eight, long pyramidal bells."

All the above mentioned goods are also proper for the trade in *Benin*, *Rio Lagos* and all along the coast to *Rio Gabon*.

BENIN TRADE GOODS.

"Exports, 1678: cotton cloths like those of *Rio Lagos*, women slaves, for men slaves (though they be all foreigners, for none of the natives can be sould as such) are not allowed to be exported, but must stay there; jasper stones, a few tigers' or leopards' skins, acory or blue coral, elephant's teeth, some pieminto, or pepper. The blue coral grows in branching bushes like the red coral at the bottom of the rivers and lakes in Benin, which the natives have a peculiar art to grind or work into beads like olives, and is a very profitable merchandise at the Gold Coast, as has been observed.

"The Benin cloths are of 4 bands striped blue and white, an ell and a half long, only proper for the trade at *Sabou river* and at *Angola*, and called by the blacks *monponoqua* and the blue narrow cloths *ambastis*; the latter are much inferior to the former every way, and both sorts made in the inland country.

"The European goods are these: cloths of gold and silver, scarlet and red cloth, all sorts of calicoes and fine linen, *Haerlem* stuffs with large flowers and well starched, iron bars, strong spirits, rum and brandy, beads or bugles of several colours, red velvet and good quantity of Boejies, cawries as much as for the Ardra (Fida) trade being the money of the natives, as well as them; false pearls, Dutch cans with red streaks at one end, bright brass large rings from 5 to 5½ ounces weight each, earrings of red glass or crystal, gilt looking glasses, crystal, &c."

OUWERE (NOW CALLED WARRI) TRADE, AND THE NEW CALABAR TRADE, 1678.

"Exports mainly slaves and fine cloths from New Calabar district and Ouwere. 'The principal thing that passes in Calabar as current money among the natives is brass rings for the arms or legs, which they call *bochie*, and they are so nice in the choice of them that they will often turn over a whole cask before they find 2 to please their fancy.'

"The *English* and *Dutch* import there a great deal of copper in small bars, round and equal, about 3 feet long, weighing about 1¼ lbs., which the blacks of Calabary work with much art, splitting the bar into 3 parts from one end to the other, which they polish as fine as gold, and twist the 3 pieces together very ingeniously into cords to make what form of arm rings they please."

OLD CALABAR TRADE, 1678.

"The most current goods of Europe for the trade of Old Calabar to purchase slaves and elephants' teeth are iron bars, in quality and chiefly, copper bars, blue rags, cloth and striped *Guinea* clouts of many colours, horse bells, hawks' bells, rangoes, pewter basons of 1, 2, 3 and 4 lbs. weight, tankards of ditto of 1, 2, and 3 lbs. weight, beads very small and glazed yellow, green, purple and blue, purple copper armlets or arm rings of *Angola* make, but this last sort of goods is peculiar to the *Portuguese*."

The blacks there reckon by copper bars, reducing all sorts of goods to such bars; for example, 1 bar of iron, 4 copper bars; a man slave for 38 and a woman slave for 37 or 36 copper bars.

TRADE OF RIO DEL REY, AMBOZES COUNTRY, CAMARONES RIVER, AND DOWN TO RIO GABON.

"The *Dutch* have the greatest share in the trade here in yachts sent from Mina on the Gold Coast, whose cargo consists mostly of small copper bars of the same sort as mentioned at Old Calabar, iron bars, coral, brass basons, of the refuse goods of the Gold Coast, bloom coloured beads or bugles and purple copper armlets or rings made at *Loanda* in *Angola*, and presses for lemons and oranges. In exchange for which they yearly export from thence 400 or 500 slaves, and about 10 or 12 tons weight of fine large teeth, 2 or 3 of which commonly weigh above a hundredweight besides accory, javelins and some sorts of knives which the blacks there make to perfection, and are proper for the trade of the Gold Coast."

"*Ambozes* country, situated between the *Rio del Rey* and *Rio Camarones*, is very remarkable for the immense height of the mountains it has near the sea-shore, which the Spaniards call *Alta Tierra de Ambozi*, and reckon some of them as high as the *Pike of Teneriffe* (this refers to the great Camaroon, 13,760 feet). Trade in teeth, accory and slaves, for iron and copper bars, brass pots and kettles, hammered bugles or beads, bloom colour purple, orange and lemon colour ox, horns, steel files, &c."

The trade in the Rio Gabon at this time was inferior to that at Cape Lopez. Indeed, the ascendency the Gaboon trade attained to in the middle parts of this 19th century was an artificial one, the natural outlet for the trade being the districts round the mouth of the Ogowé river, which penetrates through a far greater extent of country than the rivers Rembwe and Ncomo, which form the Gaboon estuary or *Rio Gabon* of Barbot.

"Great numbers of ships ran to *Cape Lopez Gonsalves* in the seventeenth century, and did a pretty brisk trade

in cam wood, beeswax, honey and elephants' teeth, of which last a ship may sometimes purchase three or four thousand-weight of good large ones and sometimes more, and there is always an abundance of wax; all which the Europeans purchase for knives called *Bosmans*, iron bars, beads, old sheets, brandy, malt, spirits or rum, axes, the shells called cauris, annabas, copper bars, brass basons, from eighteenpence to two shillings apiece, firelocks, muskets, powder, ball, small shot, &c."

SELECTION OF GOODS FOR THE ISLANDS FERNANDO PO, ST. THOMAS'S, PRINCE'S AND ANNOBON.

There were about 150 ships per annum calling and trading at San Tomé in the seventeenth century. The goods in "*French* ships particularly consist in *Holland* cloth or linen as well as of *Rouen* and *Brittany*, thread of all colours, serges, silk stockings, fustians, *Dutch* knives, iron, salt, olive oil, copper in sheets or plates, brass kettles, pitch, tar, cordage, sugar forms (from 20 to 30 lbs. apiece), brandy, all kinds of strong liquors and spirits, *Canary* wines, olives, carpets, fine flour, butter, cheese, thin shoes, hats, shirts, and all sorts of silks out of fashion in *Europe*, hooks, &c., of each sort a little in proportion."

In connection with this now but little considered island of San Tomé, so called from having been discovered in the year 1472, under the direction of Henry the Navigator, on the feast day of the Apostle Thomas, there is an interesting bit of history, which has had considerable bearing on the culture of the Lower Congo regions.

The Portuguese, observing the fertility of the soil of this island, decided to establish a colony there for the convenience of trading in the Guinea regions; but the climate was so unwholesome that an abundance of men died before it was well settled and cultivated. "Violent fevers and cholicks that drove them away soon after they were set a-shore."

"The first design of settling there was in the year 1486, but perceiving how many perished in the attempt, and that they could better agree with that of the continent on the coast of Guinea, it was resolved by King Jaõ II. of Portugal that all the Jews within his dominions, which were vastly numerous, should be obliged to receive baptism, or upon refusal be transported to the coast of Guinea, where the Portuguese had already several considerable settlements and a good trade, considering the time since its first discovery.

"A few years after such of those Jews as had escaped the malignant air, were forced away to this Isle of San Tomé; these married to black women, fetched from Angola in great numbers, with near 3,000 men of the same country.

"From these Jews married to black women in process of time proceeded mostly that brood of mulattos at this day inhabiting the island. Most of them boast of being descended from the Portuguese; and their constitution is by nature much fitter to bear with the malignity of the air." (For a full account of this matter see the *History of Portugal* by Faria y Sousa, p. 304.)

San Tomé is now very flourishing, on account of its soil being suited to cocoa and coffee, and there are to-day there plenty of full-blooded Portuguese; but the old strain of Jewish mulattos still exists and is represented by individuals throughout all the coast regions of West Africa. Moreover, these mulattos secured in the seventeenth century a monopoly for Portugal of the slave trade in the Lower Congo, and I largely ascribe the prevalence of customs identical with those mentioned in the Old Testament that you find among the Fjort tribes to their influence, although you always find such customs represented in all the native cultures in West Africa (presumably because the West African culture is what the Germans would call the *urstuff*), but I fancy in no culture are they so developed as among the Fjorts.[1]

[1] For the reasons for the unhealthiness of this island see my *Travels in West Africa* (Macmillan), p. 46.

TRADE GOODS FOR CONGO AND CABENDA, 1700.

"Blue bafts, a piece containing 6 yards and of a deep almost black colour, and is measured either with a stick of 27 inches, of which 8 sticks make a piece, or by a lesser stick, 18 inches long, 12 of which are accounted a piece, *Guinea* stuffs, 2 pieces to make a piece, tapseils have the same measure as blue bafts.

Nicanees, the same measure.

Black bays, 2½ yards for a piece, measured by 5 sticks of 18 inches each.

Annabasses, 10 to the piece.

Painted callicoes, 6 yards to the piece.

Blue paper Slesia, 1 piece for a piece. Scarlet, 1 stick of 18 inches or ½ a yard is accounted a piece.

Muskets, 1 for a piece.

Powder, the barrel or rundlet of 7 lbs. goes for a piece.

Brass basons, 10 for a piece. We carry thither the largest.

Pewter basons of 4, 3, 2 and 1 lb. The No. 4 goes 4 to the piece, and those of 1 lb. 8 to a piece.

Blue perpetuanas have become but of late in great demand, they are measured as blue bafts, 6 yards making the piece.

Dutch cutlaces are the most valued because they have 2 edges, 2 such go for a piece.

Coral, the biggest and largest, is much more acceptable here than small coral, which the Blacks value so little that they will hardly look on it, usually 1½ oz. is computed a piece.

Memorandum. A whole piece of blue bafts contains commonly 18½ yards, however some are shorter and others exceed.

Pentadoes commonly contain 9 or 9½ to the piece.

Tapseils. The piece usually holds 15 yards.

Nicanees. The piece is 9 or 9½ yards long."

The main export of Congo was slaves and elephants' teeth and grass clothes called Tibonges, were used by the

Portuguese at Loando in Angola. Some of them single marked with the arms of Portugal, and others double marked, and some unmarked.

The single marked cloth was equal in value to 4 unmarked, equal to about 8 pence.

TRADE GOODS FOR SAN PAUL DO LOANDA.

Cloths with red lists, great ticking with long stripes and fine wrought red kerseys, *Silesia* and other fine linen, fine velvet, small and great gold and silver laces, broad black bays, *Turkish* tapestry or carpets, white and all sorts of coloured yarns, blue and black beads, stitching and sewing silk, *Canary* wines, brandy, linseed oil, seamen's knives, all sorts of spices, white sugar and many other commodities and trifles as great fish-hooks, pins a finger long, ordinary pins, needles and great and small hawks' bells.

"The *English* compose their cargoes generally of brass, basons, annabasses, blue bafts, paper, brawls, *Guinea* stuffs, muskets, powder, nicanees, tapseils, scarlet, *Slesia's*, coral, bags, wrought pewter, beads, pentedoes, knives, spirits, &c., all sorts of haberdashery, silks, linens, shirts, hats, shoes, &c., wrought pewter plates, dishes, porringers, spoons of each a little assortment are also very probably vended among the *Portuguese*, and also all manner of native made cloths from other parts of *Guinea* fetch good prices in *Angola*."

APPENDIX II

AN EARLY AFRICAN VOYAGE.

WHEREIN is given some account of the voyage of the ship *Hannibal* of London, made in the years 1693-94 by Captain Thomas Phillips, whereby the students of West Africa may be instructed in the way wherein the slave trade was carried on in the Seventeenth Century.

OF all the many accounts of slaving voyages I have ever read, I know none equal in convincing power to that of Phillips, though modern writers have not dealt with it, choosing Snelgrave or Stibbs. Snelgrave, it is true, had a fine varied time of it one way and another, but he himself was a poor sort of man, rather like our friend Robert Baker, representatives both of a class of men who ought not to be allowed to go to Guinea.

Captain Thomas Phillips[1]—in the war times of King William III., homeward bound from Venice and Zant in the *William*, 200 tons, and 20 guns, surrendered without resistance to three French men-of-war who fell in with him in Soundings, about 60 leagues South-west from Cape Clear in Ireland. The ship he struck his ensign to was the *Crown*, of 70 brass guns—guns counted more than tonnage then—he was carried aboard her and most courteously treated by her commander, Chevalier de

[1] See Churchill's Collection pp. 171–239.

Monbroun, who took him to Brest, where he was kept prisoner. When he returned to England he was in a state of poverty until he was taken up by Sir Jeffry Jeffreys, who bought the *Hannibal*—450 tons, and 36 guns—placed Phillips in command, and got the venture recognised by the Royal African Company and sent him on a trading voyage to Guinea, for elephants' teeth, gold, and Negro slaves.

The *Hannibal* left London on September 13th, 1693, and affairs began in the Downs, where he fell in with the *East India Merchant* and other vessels going to West Africa, so they agreed to sail together, and the Captain of the *East India Merchant*—Mr. Shurley—was voted Commodore, because he was well used to the Guinea trade. This, however, promptly turned out an unfortunate selection. In thick weather Shurley ran aground by the South Foreland, and Phillips went to his assistance, and found a pretty dusty state of affairs aboard, "the men being very perverse and refractory." Phillips holds forth on this at length, attributing it to Shurley not being kind to his men, and he strongly advises Merchant Captains to gain their men's goodwill and affection by being humane to them, and giving them their full allowance of good and wholesome provisions. "For," says he, "nothing grates upon seamen more than pinching their bellies or treating them with cruelty, or reproachful words, whereas, if they have justice done to them and be permitted their little forecastle songs and jests with freedom, they will, for a good word now and then, run through fire and water, to serve their Captain. On the other hand, they should be always kept employed so long as there is anything to be done. But not plagued by being set to work unnecessarily, much less, merely to gratify a tyrannical humour, to the ship's and the owner's prejudice, which is too often the case."

The whole of Phillips' animadversions on this question are very interesting, and they point to the Philadelphia Catechism being existent in those days.

"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou art able.

"And on the seventh, Holystone the deck and scrape the cable."

However, they got Captain Shurley off the South Foreland, and proceeded; and the next trouble was that the first gale they met showed the foremast of the *Hannibal* to be rotten to the heart 3 feet above the partners in the forecastle, which was a serious affair, while in the gale they lost sight of Captain Shurley. When the gale moderated it was found that one of the soldiers they were carrying out for the Royal African Company's castles in Guinea was a woman. "She was about twenty years old and a likely black girl." This gave rise to difficulties which Captain Phillips gallantly tackled with a needle and thread and true marine propriety and discretion. The voyage was next enlivened by falling in with another vessel off Teneriffe. Evidently in those days on sighting another vessel you, as a matter of course, prepared either to fight it or fly. Phillips was a fighter, so he kept jogging along towards her easily under fighting sails till four, at which time the Frenchman, for so the ship proved to be, being within carbine shot, ran out his lower tier of guns, which Phillips did not expect, or was well pleased to see, nine of a side, and striking his false colours hoisted the French white sheet. Phillips, seeing the Frenchman and resolved to pluck a crow with him, after drinking a dram and encouraging his men, ordered them to their guns and expected the enemy's broadside which, when they came within pistol shot they gave him, besides a volley of small shot. Phillips returned his civility very heartily, after which, the privateer shot ahead of them and brought to, and falling on their larboard side gave them a second broadside which was returned.

The firing on each side continued hot till 10 o'clock at night, when the Frenchman's foretop mast came by the board, on which he fell astern of them and made the best of his way to leeward with his boat towing ahead. They gave them a levet with their trumpets, and what guns they had loaded, to bid them farewell, being heartily glad to be rid of such a troublesome guest.

Phillips' ship was miserably shattered and torn in his masts and rigging—there were eleven shots in the main-mast, three quite through, the main-top shot to pieces, the main-topmast splintered half way, the mizen shot in two, the sprit-sail, topmast jack and jack staff shot away and the ensign staff brought by the board. So that they had no colours flying most part of the engagement, but the King's pendant, which Phillips fought under by virtue of his Letter of Marque.

The Frenchman evidently, as was the custom in those days when you wanted to take a ship, did not attempt to damage her hull, but to destroy her rigging. Phillips went more desperately to business and fired into his antagonist's hull. Phillips, besides his standing gear, laments "a suit of sails quite spoiled, some being full of holes like strainers, five men killed outright and thirty-two wounded," amongst whom were the Captain's brother, the gunner, carpenter and boatswain; the carpenter had his arm shot off, and three others their legs, five or six of his best men were dreadfully scorched with powder, and the harper had his skull fractured with a small shot. Next morning Phillips saw his enemy standing to the Northward from them, having, he conjectured, "had his belly full the night before." It was subsequently known that the ship that engaged Phillips was the *Lewis* of St. Malo, Captain de Gra, carrying 52 guns and 280 men, and that Phillips had killed for him 63 men and wounded 70, and so damaged his ship that he had to go forthwith to Lina and refit—no bad bit of fighting for a Guinea man. Phillips gives a graphic account of the day after the fight; they had to live on bread and cheese and punch because the hearth and furnace were shot through and no cooking possible; they also had shot-holes below the water line of the *Hannibal* that could not be properly stopped because a high sea was running, and they had a hogshead of brandy shot through in the Lazarette "whose loss they much regretted." The day after that, about 10 feet of the starboard yard arm broke, being shot through and so on; so Phillips sailed for St. Jago in the Cape Verde Islands, to stop his leaks and get fresh pro-

visions for his wounded. Two days later on their voyage to St. Jago they sighted another sail and prepared for a fresh engagement. The *Hannibal* was clear for a fight in less than an hour's time, "the men being grown dexterous at it since the last," and apparently enjoying it, but the sail apparently fearing them, crowded on all canvas and fled, and the event of the day was the cutting off the bagpiper's leg below the knee because of his wound.

When they reached St. Jago Porto Prayer Bay, they were promptly fired on by the authorities, but managed to get themselves explained as friends, and went on shore to call on the commanding officer of the garrison, escorted by a dozen half starved looking soldiers armed with lances and swords. The commanding officer was an agreeable old gentleman living in a rickety house, and like most Portuguese officers to this day, possessed of a grievance: what he complained of was that he had been decoyed to this place by the Governor of Lisbon on the strength of fair promises which were never performed; however he received Phillips kindly, and explained he had fired on him mistaking him for a pirate. On the ensuing Sunday, Phillips went in his pinnace to the harbour of St. Jago, where he ran in against the gate of the town, and his trumpets sounded a levet which brought the Governor and the congregation out of church in great haste and alarm, evidently again thinking that they were pirates. However he and Phillips went into the Government House to talk over things amicably, and had what Mr. Phillips calls "a collation which consisted of a loaf of good white bread, and a box of Marmalade served on a napkin, and a square case bottle half full of Maderia wine, but so thick, foul, and hot, that he had much ado to drink it." Phillips was most anxious to buy cattle, but found it difficult to buy them, or anything except for gold, which he had not got; but by means of giving the governor his walking cane in response to a broad hint, and promising him a Cheshire cheese, he got on well with him, though he does not flatter him in his description, particularly about his "long black wig which

reached to his middle, but some one had plucked out all the curls."

Phillips then naturally as a return civility for "the collation," asked the governor to come on board his vessel to a return banquet. The governor gently but firmly declined, saying "there was a rule made against it on account of some privateers and pirates, who, having gotten the governor on board, would not let him come ashore till he had ordered what provisions they demanded, for which they used to give a bill of exchange payable in London upon John a Noakes, or the Pump at Aldgate —as Avery the pirate's bill was to the Governor of St. Thomas's Island."

Leaving St. Jago and the kindly, if not particularly helpful Portuguese, Phillips sailed on with nothing worse happening than tornadoes until he reached Cape Musurado and at Cape Musurado he found Captain Shurley in his normal state—difficulties. This time a thunder-bolt had settled on his foremast, and his foretop-gallant had been set afire by another flash of lightning, and Phillips went to his aid, as usual. Also there was in the anchorage "one Gubbins, an interloper."

While the repairs of Captain Shurley were going on, the whole party went in a friendly way ashore, and associated with the local natives, among whom they found living a Scotchman who could give no good account of himself, and Phillips heard afterwards that he "belonged to a pirate who had been on the coast to look for purchas, but the crew quarrelling amongst themselves, many of them were slain and desperately wounded in the conflict. There being none left but this fellow who could in any way manage the vessel, he ran her ashore at the S. E. of Cape Musurado and so saved his life, the rest of the crew dying of their wounds"—evidently a beautiful early example of Mr. Stevenson's :—

> "With one of her crew alive
> Who put to sea with seventy-five."

This Scot, although possessed of a long flaxen wig

and a white beaver hat and some good clothes, Phillips and Shurley both refused to take on as a sailor, because "they saw so much of the villain in his face," but Mr. Agent Caulker who was also there in the *Stanin* sloop, took him to Sherboro, a thing he had cause to regret by and by.

Finally when Shurley's ship had been repaired, they set out again down the coast trading, getting little but peppers until they reached Cape Lahou, where the natives came off to them with ivory for sale. These natives however were of so nervous a disposition, that it gave a world of trouble to get them on board. When this had been done and they were just settling down nicely to business, a "large mastiff dog"—the *Hannibal* was always a floating menagerie—hearing the row on deck, dashed open mouthed out of the steerage, and overboard the natives went like greased lightning, leaving their ivory behind. Phillips entreated them to come back; he held the ivory over the side—he went down the ladder and dropped sea water into his eye, "a thing reassuring to these people," but it was all in vain, until the mastiff dog was brought in view and a show made of beating him stoutly. Then the natives returned still nervous, "for nothing could stir but they were ready to take their spring into the sea, and they had their eyes on every corner." This nervousness however did not upset their business instincts, for they held their ivory at so high a price, Phillips could not afford to buy much of it.

The account Phillips gives of these Ivory Coast natives is very interesting; he says he was astonished when they first came to hear nothing but qua, qua, qua, qua, like a company of ducks, wherefrom he rightly conjectures that the Ivory Coast is called by some navigators the Qua Qua Coast, this qua qua being the local form of greeting, signifying "friend." Each canoe, says he, brings a broker, who as soon as he enters the ship demands a *dashi* of a knife or two, under pretence of bringing the trade to you, and at every bargain he again expects a *dashi*: this is all he gets, the native merchant

allowing him nothing. Phillips attributes the excessive nervousness of these natives to their having had "some tricks played on them by Long Ben" (Avery), whom he held accountable for most West African affairs not directly attributable to other causes.

Passing on down coast to Little Bassam, they began to trade in gold, and Captain Phillips's narrative now begins to chronicle the ravages of fever among the crews; of his own, so far he had only lost his brother, but Captain Shurley had buried eight, and he himself and most of his men were very ill. While in this dismal state, nearly becalmed and in a fog, they fell in with a Dutchman who had had a bad trading tour, and who told them that France and England were still at war, and that Gubbins, the interloper, and his doctor were both dead. Phillips himself was now taken with a dimness of his eyes and a dizziness of his head, so that he could not stand or walk without assistance.

There were, reports Phillips, about a dozen Dutch interlopers on the coast at this time, notwithstanding that their Company, the Dutch Netherlands India Company, has an exclusive grant of this trade, with power to attack and make prize all private traders, the ship and goods being confiscated to the use of the Dutch Company, the men made prisoners in a dungeon at the Mina (Elmina) and the captain and principal officers condemned to death. The General at Elmina was further commissioned to try and put to death any criminals of that nation who by court martial may be thought to deserve it, without appeal to Europe; whereas the English agents for the English Company can only secure the malefactor and send him in irons home to England to be tried there. The Dutch Company have frequently by stratagem seized some of these interlopers and used them with the utmost rigour, yet it does not deter them, they providing themselves with nimble ships, which outsail the Company's and go well manned and well armed, and generally fight it out to the last man, rather than yield; and Phillips says he has seen four or five Dutch interlopers at a time, lying before the great Dutch fort of Elmina, [illegible]

now, trading for a week at a time, as it were in defiance of it.

Phillips and Shurley did some interesting dining out ashore with the various European factors, and bought some coney stones for the slaves to grind their corn on, though slaves they had not yet shipped; therefore they broke their instructions on reaching Dixcove, which was the furthest port assigned to them for their voyage by their owners, and proceeded further along the coast, calling at Secundel where they found Mr. Johnson at the English Castle in his bed, raving mad, in consequence of a severe domestic difficulty, in which the commander at the neighbouring Dutch castle, Mynheer Vanhukeline and a native lady played prominent parts. Phillips and Shurley were entertained by the second factor in command to the best of his ability under the circumstances, and they heard some little time after, when away down coast, that the negroes having been set on by Vanhukeline, had surprised the English fort, cut poor Johnson to pieces, and plundered all his goods and merchandise.

From Secundel they went down to Chama and did a good trade in gold, but not so good as they could have done, for the Dutch did their utmost to frighten the natives from trafficking with the English, and were generally insolent, in spite of the two countries being at peace and under one king: thence off to Kommendo where they got more gold, and then to Ampeni point, between Kommendo and Mina, where they got about 30 marks of gold, each mark being 8 ounces troy. Two days later they passed Mina Castle, saluting it with 7 guns, and anchored between it and Cape Coast Castle where they did the best trade of all, the negroes coming to them from all the towns to the Eastwards as far as Kormantine, and two days again later they anchored in Cape Coast Road, saluting the English Castle with 15 guns.

They stayed twenty-nine days at Cape Coast, then the principal English settlement in Guinea. At Cape Coast they landed thirty soldiers for the Company, in as

good a health as they were in England; but in two months' time near half of them died, and here again Phillips had trouble. William Lord, a trumpeter of his, in a drunken quarrel fought a duel with one of the serjeants of the Castle and wounded him severely; as the wound was not regarded as necessarily fatal, Lord was handed over to Phillips, to whom for the rest of the voyage he was a chronic curse, for "being a most dissolute, wicked wretch" the Captain was forced to keep him in irons upon the poop all the way from San Thomé Island to Barbadoes. Here Phillips intended to hand him over to a man of war, but Mr. Lord persuaded him to forbear from doing this, which Phillips much regretted afterwards, for Mr. Lord as soon as he could get ashore at Barbadoes did so, and did not come back to the ship, concealing himself until he had spent all his money, when he, and some others of Phillips's men who also ran away, entered themselves on a New England frigate of twenty guns, an excellent sailer, whom some Barbadoes merchants had bought and fitted out in a warlike manner, on the pretence that she was to go to Madagascar to purchase negroes; but the real design was not so respectable. What she was meant for was to go to the Red Sea, and make her market with the Mogul's ships, just buying a few negroes to give an air of respectability to her on her return to Barbadoes, and that only because the Governor of Jamaica was nearly related to the English admiral.

At Cape Coast they got on board the Indian corn for the slaves they hoped to ship, the allowance for each slave then being one chest of corn, containing about four bushels, for the voyage from Guinea to Barbadoes; so now, with stones to grind the corn on, and corn to grind, they proceeded to get canoes to ship the slaves in before getting the slaves themselves; and off for canoes they went to Mr. Buckeridge, factor for the English Company at Winnebar. Mr. Buckeridge they found in hourly expectation of being slaughtered by the Quamboers, an inland people who frequently ravaged the coast villages for booty, and who had sent him messages of their intentions in his direction, which, as he lived in a mere

mud house with a thatched roof, naturally made him feel nervous, although the Queen of Wimbah assured him she would lose her own life before he should suffer injury. Her majesty was about fifty years of age and very corpulent, and devoted to Mr. Buckeridge, being free with her kisses to him, and indeed, says Phillips in approval of her majesty's foreign policy, "he deserved every respect from all who knew him, being an extraordinary good humoured and ingenious gentleman, who understood the country and the language very well." Phillips however, like Mr. Buckeridge, though valuing this queen's kindness, thought it not enough for safety if those rampagious Quamboers came; so gave him two guns. Buckeridge himself meanwhile was very busy building a fort, which to his vexation did not progress rapidly, because of the difficulty of getting things which he needed from Cape Coast Castle, including workmen, and because of the badness of the bricks he himself made, "which were sad crumbling trash." His cement however was good, being made from oyster shells, and on that cement and the Queen's affection, and the two extra guns, Buckeridge relied; but for all that he went away with Phillips on a visit to Accra, until his local politics cooled down a little.

At Accra Phillips took more gold, making in all 113 marks of gold, 904 ounces, and he bought another canoe from the black general, who had some little time before seized the Danish fort at Accra. This capture of the Danish fort is another typical instance of the sort of thing that, from time to time, broke the monotony of life on the coast in the 17th century. A parcel of negroes, according to Phillips, privately armed, got in, under the pretence of trade, and having stabbed the second factor while the chief factor was showing them goods, dispersed, to secure all the others of the castle, a party lying concealed without to assist them upon signal given. The Danish general of the castle hearing the tumult, came out of his chamber, sword in hand, to see what was the matter, and was immediately assaulted by two blacks, against whom he made good his ground

for some time, calling out for assistance; but none coming and more blacks pressing on, he flung himself out of a window and fled to the Dutch fort, after receiving several wounds, one of which disabled his left arm. Phillips offered him, and he accepted, a free passage home to Europe, though he was in great fear of being called to account in Denmark for the loss of the castle.

The black general, who seized the castle, and the 400 ounces of gold it had in hand, established himself firmly, and did business with the Dutch interlopers, or any one else, and Phillips and Buckeridge, for Shurley was ill, went to dinner with him and had a good one, the general having been a cook to one of the English factories, and even now in his exalted state frequently going into the kitchen to give orders. He dined with his guests in great state, having a negro boy with a pistol on each side of him, and he drank the King of England's health, and the African Company's, and his guests', with volleys of cannon, in West Coast style, firing about 200 while they were there. The flag this enterprising African flew was white with a black man on it, brandishing a scimitar.

While Phillips was here two Danish ships arrived of twenty guns each, sent on purpose to deal with the black general for the surrendering of the fort, and bringing with them a new Danish Governor for it, and soldiers, provisions, ammunition, and merchandise; but negotiations came to nothing until some time after Phillips's departure, owing to the black general's exorbitant demands. Subsequently, however, he handed over the fort to the Danes, upon their signing an instrument to quit all pretence of reparation or satisfaction from him or his people; the black general also kept all the gold and merchandise he found in the castle, and the Danes paid him 400 ounces more on his delivering the castle up to them.

The Danish ships who had carried out these not particularly successful negotiations, when they were completed went on to Whydah and purchased slaves, and sailed for the West Indies. The Danish general,

who had promised to come with Phillips, joined his countrymen, though not without reluctance; and ill-success still followed these Danes, for on their way to the West Indies Long Ben (Avery) fell in with them, fought, took, plundered, and burnt their ships; and so ended their unhappy voyage.

But to return to Phillips. At Accra poor Captain Shurley died, having been long ill with dysentery, and at Accra he was buried with full military honours *à la Soldado*. He left the command of *The East Indiaman* to his first mate, Mr. Clay, and his private affairs to his purser, Mr. Price, "who knew how all lay."

Phillips was now head of the expedition, and he took on here from Mr. Bloome a young "tyger," which, like so many of his things, was no end of a nuisance to him. This tyger (bush cat) had fallen into Bloome's hands some time before, and he being a wise man gave it to a friend, a Mr. Ronan, at Cape Coast, who found it very tame; but for all that gave it to Phillips, who "fed it on fowl's guts and other garbage, for it would eat nothing but flesh." He was so tame that any white man might play with him through the cage with his hands, but at the sight of blacks he became outrageous. Phillips says he frequently put his hand in his mouth and took him by the tongue and paw, without being offered the least injury. "This tyger would play wantonly, and suffer himself to be stroked like a cat, which he did in all respects resemble; but he was finely spotted like a leopard, about the size of an ordinary greyhound, and as slender in the limbs and body. But at length he discovered himself to be a true tyger, and that there was no changing of Nature." In addition to this animal, which we shall have occasion to mention later, Phillips took on board from a Dutch interloper "two civet cats, that smelled so strong he never cared to come near them," and several monkeys, baboons, and parrots, for a piece of eight each.

Leaving Accra, they reached the mouth of the Volta, and next day, being on the Alampo coast, a canoe came off with three women and four children to sell in

it; but they were dear, and mere skeletons, so Phillips did not buy them, and remarks that the natives here are reckoned the worst and most washy of any brought to the West Indies, where they yield the least price. The natives of the Golden Coast, usually called Kormantine negroes, are most in demand; he says, in Barbadoes, they will yield £3 or £4 a head more than those of Whydah, or as they are called Papa negroes; next to these in value come negroes from Angola, and last, and least of all, those of Alampo, near the mouth of the Volta.

The next day from calling at Alampo they reached Whydah, and when they had got all ready, the two captains, Phillips and Shurley's successor, went on shore accompanied by their doctors and pursers, to reside there until they could purchase 1,300 slaves to complete their cargo, a performance that kept them ashore about nine weeks.

The factory of the English Company lay about three miles from the seaside, and Mr. Joseph Pierson was the factor in charge, "a very brisk man, who had good interest with the king and credit with the subjects, being acquainted with their temperament, which is very dastardly. He knew how to treat them rough and smooth, as occasion required; most of the slaves belonging to the factory were Gold Coast negroes, who are very brave and sensible, and likewise firmly in his interest, ten of these would beat the best forty men the King of Whydah has."

The factory itself stood in the marshes, and was very unwholesome, and invaded by swarms of mosquitoes, but was useful to store goods in, on their way to the king's factory in his town, and to some extent, protected the goods from thieves, the negro porters being great adepts in pilfering, for even in the daytime they would steal the cowries, having wedges which they drove in between the barrel-staves, which let the shells drop out, and if they thought a white was watching them they just took out the wedge and the crack made closed again, and these porters always had their wives and children around to carry off the plunder.

On the captains landing, the king sent two of his caboceers or noblemen, with his compliments to the factory, who signified to them they would call on his majesty next day. The king, not quite satisfied with this answer from the factory, sent two more of his grandees, saying other captains had called on him the same night that they landed; and anxious to propitiate his majesty, the captains, Mr. Pierson, and the whole party set off in hammocks forthwith to the king's town, some four miles away. They were met at the palace gate by several caboceers, who saluted them with the usual ceremony of first clapping their own hands, and then taking and shaking theirs very cordially.

Entering the palace yard, all the nobles fell on their knees near the door of the room where the king was, clapping their hands, knocking the ground with their foreheads and kissing it, which they repeated three times, the usual ceremony on approaching his majesty.

Then rising, they led the English to the rooms, which they found covered with the nobility on their knees, and those who introduced them falling on theirs, crawled to their respective stations, and so continued all the time of their audience. This was the ceremony that took place whenever they saw the king.

His majesty then peeped out from behind a curtain and beckoned to the English, whereupon they drew close to the throne, which was of clay, raised about two feet from the ground, and about four feet square, surrounded with old dirty curtains always drawn, because the king would not allow the noblemen to see his face. Seemingly he had no such objection to being seen by the white men, who found him behind the curtains "with two or three little black children, and smoking tobacco in a long wooden pipe, the bowl of which seemed big enough to hold an ounce. He rested on his throne with a bottle of brandy beside him, and a little dirty silver cup by his side. His head was tied about with a roll of coarse calico, and he had a loose red damask gown to cover him." Subsequently he was fond of showing his guests his wardrobe, an extensive one of gowns and

mantles of rich silver and gold, brocaded silks trimmed with flowers of small parti-coloured beads, presents, he said, made him by captains who traded there.

The captains saluted his majesty with their hats, and he took them by the hands, and said he longed to see them, for he loved Englishmen dearly, that they were his brothers, and he would do them all the good offices he could. They answered diplomatically, extolling the African Company they represented, and he said the African Company was a good brave man, that he loved him, and he should be fairly dealt with.

The formalities of presentation to court being happily over, the king proceeded to entertain his guests with a dinner, one not much to Phillips's liking, and difficult to deal with, knives, forks and napkins having no part in it. However, there was no want of geniality on the part of the host. They drank to him and he to them, bowing, kissing his hand, and bursting now and then suddenly into a scream of laughter, doubtless finding his guests as quaint in their way as they found him in his. Dinner over, they settled down to the transaction of business—his majesty opening with inquiries after Captain Shurley. On being informed that he had died at Accra, he burst into loud howling, wringing his hands, and often wiping his eyes, though the tears came not. Shurley, he said, was his great friend, the Gold Coast had poisoned him; and then he went on to tell of mortar pieces, pictures, silks, and many other things Captain Shurley had promised to bring him as presents. Mr. Clay, Shurley's successor, said these things were not on board, whereupon his majesty became exceedingly angry, and roundly said Clay was keeping those things for himself, now that Shurley was dead; so it ended in Clay having to promise him blunderbuses, silks, &c., things indeed he had with him from the African Company to be used as presents. After this the transaction of business went on calmly, and arrangements were concluded as to the number of slaves and so on that they required. On the whole these arrangements were ultimately well carried out; the king made the most he could on the affair, he

was a specimen of the diplomatic gusher, common in West Africa, with his wits well sharpened by experience with equally keen white traders; his caboceers also had each a keen eye on the main chance, but agreements made were agreements kept, which is sound business at bottom.

The next morning, trade being now officially allowed, the captains attended upon his majesty and displayed samples of the various kinds of goods they had brought with them, and an agreement was come to as to how much of each sort of goods was to be paid for a slave, this fixing of the market price preventing all further haggling. When this was done the captains were given a warehouse, a kitchen, and a lodging in the town for their use while they were carrying on the slave buying, and next morning, when they had duly paid their customs dues to the king and to the caboceers, public notice was given by the bellman that all persons having slaves to sell might bring them to the Trunk (market place or exchange) for inspection, and the price fixed for each slave was also publicly announced.

It is needless to remark that the king disposed of his own goods first, and criticism on the age and quality of his slaves was not considered politic—you sort of had to take them. The slaves of the caboceers came next into the market, and then came those of the ordinary vendor. Things, however, went off in the most orderly style. There was a special caboceer whose duty it was to see the slaves who had been purchased safely to the sea beach, and to take care of them there until they were shipped on board; and so well did this officer do his duty that out of the 1,300 purchased he did not lose one; the fact that he was personally responsible for any one of them who was lost while in his charge doubtless stimulated him in his duty.

Phillips remained at Whydah from May 20th to July 27th; and although his health while on shore was constantly bad he has left us a singularly detailed and interesting account of the local politics and things in general in Whydah in 1693.

On leaving Whydah with their slave cargo, the party shaped their course for the island of San Thomé, then a great port of call for provisioning, before stretching out for the West Indian Islands. Phillips's health showed no signs of improvement; he had a seton made in his neck, blisters and other remedies having failed to deal with the headache—which evidently was a severe case of brow ague.

On August 6th they crossed the line, having kept close enough inshore to see Cape St. John and Coriso Island on the 4th. Crossing the line, however, sank into insignificance before the conduct of the tyger already mentioned. The slaves were all on deck at dinner time, and the said tyger broke out of his cage on the quarter deck, and seizing on a negro woman's leg, in an instant tore the calf quite off. "This one of the quartermasters perceiving, ran in and gave him a little blow with the flat of his cutlass; he couched down like a spaniel dog, and the man, taking him up in his arms dragged him along without any resistance or harm, pent him up in his coop again. This tyger's fondling with the whites and enmity with the blacks has been taken notice of already, and now they were always obliged to hang an old sail before his cage while the slaves were at dinner, else there was no pacifying him."

Phillips' intention had been to call at Cape Lopez, and away down beyond Gaboon, for wood and water; but he had to abandon this on account of the mortality now setting in among his negroes, and the want of provisions, so he stood over for San Thomé Island direct. Reaching it on the 11th he went ashore to visit the general, the governor being dead, and received leave to take on wood, water, and provisions. "Water," he observes, "is best fetched from here in the night by reason of the women of the town washing clothes and otherwise muddling the water all day; moreover it is well to keep an armed man watching the water barrels while they are on shore, or the Portuguese, being the greatest thieves in the world, will steal the iron hoops off them."

Trouble now thickened on Phillips; the mortality among his negroes increased so rapidly that he had to leave San Thomé and his consort *The East Indiaman* behind there, hoping that the fresh sea air would stay the disease on board. Alas! it did not; they reached Bridgetown, Barbadoes, on the 4th of November, having spent on their voyage from San Thomé two months and eleven days. "In which time there happened such sickness and mortality among his men and negroes, that of the first he buried fourteen, and of the last 320. This was a great detriment to his voyage, the Company losing £20 by every slave who died, and the owners of his ship £10, that being the freight agreed to be paid them for every negro delivered alive ashore to the Company's agent at Barbadoes, whereby the loss in all amounted to £6,560. The captain delivered alive 372, which, being sold, came out at about £19 a head upon an average."

The distemper both whites and blacks chiefly died of was the white flux, which was so violent and inveterate that no medicine would in the least check it, so they reckoned them dead men as soon as seized. It began about a week after they left the Island of San Thomé; and as to the whites, next to the malignity of the climate, Phillips attributed it to nothing else but the unpurged black sugar and raw unwholesome rum they bought there, of which they drank in punch to great excess, in spite of all his endeavours, for he not only chastised several, but flung overboard what rum and sugar he could find. He was forced to clap in irons Lord, his trumpeter (before celebrated), who was the promoter of it, and among other enormities he went in one of his drunken fits with his knife to kill the boatswain in his bed. "Yet this mortal, though he remained fettered upon the poop day and night for two months without any other shelter than the canopy of heaven, was never troubled with any sickness all the time, making good the proverb, *That Nought's never in Danger.*"

Lord's conduct on reaching Barbadoes I have already dealt with. Somehow one wishes one knew whether that man was definitely dead even now; he disappeared

out of Phillips's narrative, going strong down the primrose path as a pirate, but more of him I do not know.

"Barbadoes," says Phillips, "is a pretty, pleasant spot, inhabited by a great many worthy hospitable gentlemen;" but when reached by Phillips in November, 1693, "it was violently infected with the plague, so that in the late war it proved a perfect grave to most new comers, who were generally seized with the pestilence, of which very few recovered. Captain Thomas Sherman, of the man-of-war *Tyger*, in the two years that he lay there, buried 600 men, though his complement was but 220, "still pressing new men out of the merchant ships that came in."

Phillips lost about eighteen of his crew, and, expecting to be seized with the distemper himself, did not scruple to visit all his friends and acquaintances who were infected; yet he completely escaped, while there died about twenty other masters of ships during his stay there, two of them being captains of men-of-war.

Phillips took on board about 700 hogsheads of sugar, some cotton and ginger at Barbadoes, and in company with about thirty other merchantmen and the *Tyger* man-of-war, commanded by Captain Sherman, sailed for England on April 2nd. On the 22nd of May they made the island of Scilly, poor Phillips having meanwhile, on the 19th in fact, "been seized with convulsions in the head," whereby the hearing of his left ear was much impaired; the hearing of his right ear he had lost in Guinea by a former fit; and now, having no one to look after him (his doctor being dead of the plague in Barbadoes), his deafness increased daily. Nothing else particular happened on the voyage home except the death of a passenger, a Mrs. North; and that aforesaid tiger seizing the hand of one of the cabin boys, who, while playing with it in its cage, got his hand scratched with a nail, and as soon as the tyger smelt the blood, it seized the wretched boy and tore his hand off at the wrist: he was dressed by the surgeon and put ashore at Falmouth. Leaving Falmouth the mate, who was in charge, ran the *Hannibal* ashore

coming out of the harbour; but she got off again, and all went well until the 29th of May, when they were just on the east of Beachy Head. Here the wind, taking them short at E.N.E., they thought to tide it into the Downs: accordingly the mate, who was drunk, standing with the ship off shore, and Captain Gillman, a New-England-man of twenty-eight guns standing in, the two ships drew nigh; but both, through obstinacy, refusing to bear up, or tack, in time, they ran aboard each other, the *Hannibal* entering the New Englander midships and beating in her side to such a degree that Gillman was forced to bring his ship upon the heel with his guns, to keep her from sinking. As for the *Hannibal*, her head and bowsprit, foremast, and foretopmast were carried away, the three boats that were astern sank, and had she not been a strong well-built ship it was enough to have sunk her too.

Phillips was in bed at the time very ill, but seeing the steward come into the round house much affrighted, he jumped out of bed and crawling to the cuddy beheld his ship like a wreck, floating upon the sea. On being signalled the men-of-war *Rochester* and *Crown* bore down and towed her into Spithead. "The old drunken beast of a mate lying dead drunk asleep on the forecastle, while his own and the men-of-war's men righted his ship, set up jury masts, &c."

The grief of this last accident quite deprived Philips of his hearing, so when on shore he wrote to his owners, telling them to send down another captain to fetch the *Hannibal* to London. A captain, John Hereford, was sent, and Phillips handed the ship over to him, also delivering two chests of gold to the African Company's servants sent to receive it, while he himself went with them, the gold and the guard sent to look after it, on a coach to London. "When he came to town he was recommended to a great many applauded physicians, who all pretended they would cure his deafness. But after he had been tormented by the apothecaries with doses of nasty physic every day for four or five months, and butchered by the surgeons with blisters,

issues and setons, &c., and spent about a hundred guineas among them without reaping a farthing's benefit, he resolved to shake hands with the doctors and retire into the country. Accordingly he settled his affairs in London, and being rendered unfit for his employ went down to Wales among his relations at Brecknock, his native town, there to spend the rest of his life as easy as he could under his hard misfortune."

Phillips was evidently a very quiet respectable merchant seaman, and a fine navigator. This voyage of his in the *Hannibal* figured out as a loss from no fault of his; his care for the negroes on board was constant, as well as for his own and his owners' interest, for he was naturally a kindly man, and above all he did not personally fall in with "Long Ben," as many merchantmen did in those days—yet the thing did not pay. Now and then of course there were voyages made that paid heavily; but against the profit of such voyages had to be set the losses of the others, and so the African Companies grew greatly tired of it, and one after another failed, sooner or later according as there was the strain of epidemics among the negroes, and extra foreign competition, and extra outbreaks of pirates in those seas wherein the Guinea trade lay.

INDEX

A

ABAMBO, 99, 396
Abassi-boom, 131
Abiabok (village apothecary), 138, 153–168, 185
Abindong, 153
Abrah, Oracle of, 146
Afrique, Compagnie d', History of, 228
Agriculture, 290–293
Amboises country, early trade, 473
Ancestors, 111–114
Angola, 241–247
Apougny, Sieur d', 230
Apparitions, 99
Aristotle, 380
Ashanti war, 298, 315
Association of Dieppe and Rouen merchants, 218, 227
Azambuja, Diego de, 220

B

Bakele, 158
Baladaya, Alfonso Gonsalves, 217
Bantu race (*see* Natives)
Barbot, 222, 459–477
Bastian, 111, 385
Battel, Andrew, Adventures of, 362
Benga, 129
Benin, School of Fetish in, 119–121; early trade, 471
Blyden, Dr., 362
Bohorwissi, 119
Boils, 157
Books written on West Africa, 189
Bosman, 111, 189
Bottomless pit, 58
Bristol coast trade, 71–74
Brüe, Sieur, 230, 232
Buchholtz, 385
Bush-soul, 176

C

Calabar Fetish School, 116, 122–127, 143
Canary Islands, 257
Cap, the (or Stool), 366, 385
Cape or Gold Coast Fetish, 144
Cattle, 293
Chamberlain, Mr., policy towards West Africa, 259, 261, 274, 439
Charms, 138–141
Chartered Company System, 307, 336–341
Children, Native, ownership of, 401
China, Commerce of, 251
Christianity, Prospects of, in West Africa, 107–109
Civilisation and religion, 444
Cintra, Pedro de, 221
Clarke, Sir Andrew, 448
Clifford, H., quotation from "East Coast Etchings," 323–325.
Coast, Description of, 37–44, 58–60, 62, 70
Coconut palms, 61
Colonial Nursing Association, 439
Colonies—
  English—
    Crown Colony system
      Alternative system, 341–358
      Clerking, 280, 283, 304
      Details of, 259

Colonies (*continued*)—
English—
Crown Colony System—
Effect of, in other British Colonies, 256–259
Expenditure, 282
Governors and officials, 269–272, 279–282, 311
Imperialism in, 430–457
Labour problem, 294, 306, 350–352
Natives, unwise treatment of, 313–334
Official information, sources of, 268–275
Policy of, and results, 259, 264–339, 343, 440
Resolution of 1865, 259
South African Co. similar to, 337
Taxation, 274, 282, 286, 294, 313, 317, 332
Wasted opportunities, 226
Mercantile importance of, 261–264
French—
History and government of, 213–235, 262, 265, 295
Statistics, 296
Portuguese, History and government of, 213–225, 239, 240–243
Colonisation, Reasons for, 247–250
Compagnie d'Afrique, 228
Compagnie de Guinée, 229
Congo Free State, 255, 476
Corisco Island, 76–80
Cotton, 246
Crown Colony System (*see under* Colonies, English)
Customs, 280, 281, 352
"Customs" (Fetish), 147–149

D

Dahomey, early trade, 470
Danfodio, Shaikh Utham, 236, 237
Days of the week in Fanti language, 147
Dennett, R. E., 130, 131, 156, 158, 163–166, 405, 406
Diplomacy, 238
Diseases—
Ague, 157
Boils, 157
Fetish, connection with, 153
Heart disease, 160
Hysterical form of, 160
Leprosy, 157, 159
Loyia, 156
Malignant melancholy, 160
Native treatment, &c., 154–168
Prevalent forms of, 160
Rheumatism, 155, 158
Sleeping sickness, 160, 161–168
Small-pox, 156, 158, 159, 160
Witchcraft, connection with, 178–181, 185
Yaws, The, 159
Doctors—
Abiabok (village apothecary), 138, 153–168, 185
Abiadong, 153
Witch doctor, 102–104, 169–186
Drake, Sir Francis, 457
Dream-soul, 170–175

E

Eanes, Gomez de Zurara, 215
Eannes, Gil, 217
Eboes, 117
Egbo (*see* Secret Societies, *under* "Fetish")
Elmina (La Mina del Ore), 219
Elliott, Scott, Trade Report, 289
Ellis, Sir A. B., 98, 111, 113, 188, 189, 190, 363, 379, 385, 392
English Colonies (*see under* Colonies)
Eudoxus of Cyzicus, 194–196
Ewe, Tshi and Yoruba, Fetish School, 98, 113, 118
Exploration, Early, of West Africa, 193–203

F

Face charm, 140
Faidherbe, Gen., management of Senegal, 232–235
Fangaree charm, 138–140
"Fanti customary law," 385, 393

Fetish—
Ancestors, Beliefs concerning, 111–114
Apparitions, 99
Charms, 138–141
Compared with other religions, 104, 106, 135
"Customs," 147–149
Definition of, and various details concerning, 96, 100–102, 118–131, 149
Fetish men and priesthood, 135, 142, 152
Gods and Goddesses—
Abambo, 99
Abassi-boom, 131
Bohotwissi, 119
Manu, 99, 170, 396
Mbuiri, 100
Nkala, 100
Nyankupong, 131
Nzambi, 100, 116, 130, 134, 361, 404
Nzambi Mpunga, 100, 131, 405
Ombuiri, 99
Sasabonsum, 99
Srahmantin, 116
Tando, 98
Law and religion, 391–414
Making-father ceremonies, 124
Power of, over the African mind, 106
Priesthoods and Fetish men, 135, 142–152
Schools of—
Calabar, 116, 122–127, 143
Mpongwe, 100, 128–130, 143
Nkissi or Fjort, 116, 130, 143
Tshi, Ewe and Yoruba, 98, 113, 143; Voudou and Obeah, Sects of, 118
Various details, 115–131
Secret societies, 117, 135, 144, 364, 372, 375, 384, 398, 411, 448–453
Snake and Spider worship, 118
Spirits and Souls—
Belief in, 151, 169
Bush-soul, 176
Character of, 134
Classes of, 109–111, 170, 396, 407
Fetish (*continued*—
Spirits and Souls—
Disease and cure, Connection with, 153
Dream-soul, 170–175
Immortal, 176
Incarnations of, 141
Non-human, 169
Shadow-soul, 176
Sisa, 171–174
Spirit humans, 126
"Well disposed ones," 112–114
Temples of, 144
Witchcraft and, 132–142
Filaria perstans, 162
Fish and Fishing, 75–94
Floating islands, 87
Frogs, 57
Freeman, Dr., 298, 314
Freetown harbour, 31
French Colonies (*see under* Colonies)
French trade, 235–237, 251
Funerals, 123, 125

G

Ga, 117
Gambia, early trade, 462
Geological formation, 289
Germany, Commerce of, 251
Ghagas, the, 362
Goethe, reference to "Prometheus," 102
Gold, 205–210
Gold Coast, trade statistics, 297; early trade, 464–470
Goldie, Sir George T., ability and successful work of, 237, 238, 261, 307, 339; quotation from, 342
Gomez, Fernam, 219
Gosselin, M., 200
Grains of Paradise, 48–52
Guinée, Compagnie de, 229
Gum (arucia), 235

H

"Hannibal," voyage of the, 478–499

Hanno of Carthage, early exploration of West Africa, 196–203
Heart disease, 160
Herodotus, 192, 204
Hoskins, Rev. Samuel, 44
House system, 365, 385, 398–401
Human sacrifices, 120, 123
Hut tax, 274, 294, 313, 317, 332
Hydrophobia, Native belief concerning, 68
Hypnotism, 186

I

Iben, Mr., 77
Ibibios, 117
Igalwa, 129
Imbuiri, 396
Imperialism, 415–430; in West Africa, 430–457
India, commerce of, 251
Ingram, Bishop, 46
Insects—
  Ants, driver ants, 21–28; *Myrica modesta*, 28
  Cockroaches, 8
  Crickets, 57
  Locusts, 33
  Mosquitoes, 9, 233
  Various, 9
Iron, 289
Ivory, 252
Ivory Coast, 69–74

J

Jannequin, Claude, Sieur de Rochfort, 210
Jevons, Mr., 190
João II. of Portugal, 219
Johnson, Captain Richard, 209
Johnson, Charles, 31
Jones, A. L., 257
Ju Ju, 96, 224

K

Kacongo, Kingdom of, 402
Kipling, Rudyard, 416, 419
Kla, or human soul, 170
Kohler, Professor, 392
Kru system, 447
Kru tribe, 367
Kufong society, 138–142

L

Lalat, 111
Labour problem, 294, 306, 350–352
Lagos, trade statistics and information, 300–305
Lander, 227
Language, 128, 196, 224, 360
Law and religion (African), 391–414
Law, John, financial scheme of, 211
Law God Society (*see* Secret Societies, *under* Fetish)
Leo, John, 379
Leonard, Major, 124
Leprosy, 157
Loanda, 241–243
Long John of Bonny (Chief), 142
Loyia, 156
Lucan, Dr., 165
Lyall, Sir Alfred, 133, 134

M

Machinery, demand for, in Angola, 245
Maclean, Governor, 268
Maine, Sir Henry, 129
Major, Mr., 189, 192, 213, 215, 239
Making-father ceremonies, 124
Malignant melancholy, 160
Manillas, 69
Manioc, 162
Manson, Dr. Patrick, 161, 162
Mana, or human soul, 99, 170, 396
Maxwell, Sir William, 280
Maze, Lieut., 234
Mbuiri, 100
Méduse, La, Wreck of, 198, 232
Meleguetta pepper, 48–52
Mendi tribe, 138
Merolla, 167
Minstrels, 126
Mionde, 396

Missionaries, 272–274
Mohammedanism, Progress and influence of, 107–109, 119
Monteiro, 167
Moors (*see under* Natives)
Morley, John, 419, 420
Mostro, Aluise da Ca da, 205–208
Mpongwe Fetish School, 100, 128–130, 143
Mungo, Mah Lobeh (mountain), 150
Musical instruments, 54–57

N

Nassau, Dr., 110, 128, 134, 396
Natives—
Bakele tribe, 158
Bantu culture, 360
Benga tribe, 77
Domestic affection of, 142, 319
Effect of white civilisation upon, 294, 321–334, 342
English Government, unwise policy of, towards, 294, 313–334
French, good influence with, 238
Ghagas, The, 362
Indians, compared with, 318
Intellect, logical quality of, 105
Kruboys, 44, 46, 447; Kru tribe, 367
Language, 360
Law and religion, 391–414
Liberians, 44
Life, Human, small value placed on, 150
Mendi tribe, 138
Moors, The, 205, 235–237, 363, 382
Musical instruments, 54–57
Negro, True, 359
Noise made by, 53
Property laws, &c., 359–387
Race distribution, 359, 382
Religion of (*see* Fetish)
Smugglers, 286, 287
Taxation, 274, 282, 286, 294, 313, 317, 332
Trade adulteration, 51
Value and necessity of, to work the country, 314, 337
Women, character and influence of, 320–323, 373, 375, 387–390
Navigation, difficulties of, 41–44, 58
Ncomi, 129
Nganga bilongo (*see* Abiabok)
Niger Co. (*see* Royal Niger Co.)
Niger River, Senegal, 228
Nightingale, Mr., 243–247
Nkala, 100
Nkissi, Fetish School, 116, 130, 143
Noise incessant in West Africa, 53–58
Nyanga, Nkissi, 403, 411
Nyankupong, 131
Nzambi (*see* Fetish Gods and Goddesses)
Nzambi, Mpunga (*see* Fetish Gods and Goddesses)

O

Obeah, 118
Ogi, 117
Oil, 252, 293, 301
Oil rivers, 114, 122
Old Calabar, early trade of, 472
Ombuiri, 99
Oru (*see* Secret Societies)

P

Park, Mungo, 227
Pepper, Melegueta, 48–52
Phillips, Capt., Early African voyage of, 478–499
Pneumonia, 160
Poison, Use of, by witches, 137
Poorah, 117
"Port Douglas," Wreck of, 15
Portuguese Colonies (*see under* Colonies)
Post-mortem, 179
Poultices, 155, 168
Prince Henry the Navigator, 189, 213, 215, 216–218
Property laws (Native), 359–387
Proyart, Abbé, 120
Purroh (*see* Secret Societies *under* Fetish)

R

Railways, 244, 298–300
Reade, Winwood, 76, 227

Religions—
Christianity, Prospects of, in West Africa, 107–109
Definition of, 95
Mohammedanism, Progress and influence of, 107–109, 119
Native (*see* Fetish)
Problem of future domination in West Africa, 107
"Wisdom Religion," 104
Rennell, Major, 200
Rheumatism, 155, 158
Rhodes, Mr., 337
Robbe, M., 221
Royal Niger Co., 226, 227, 237, 307–309, 336, 338–341
Rubber, 252, 293, 300
Rum, 245

S

Sailing, 85
St. Thomas's Island, early trade, 474
Salt, 205
San Paul do Loanda, early trade, 477
Sanguin, M., 233
Sarbar, Mr., author of *Fanti Customary Law*, 385, 393
Sasabonsum, 99
Sataspes, 194
Scorpions, 68, 69, 157
Secret Societies (*see under* Fetish)
Seignelay, M., 229
Senegal Colony, History of, 228–235
Senegal, Compagnie de, 229, 459–462
Senegal River (Niger), 228
Shadow soul, 176
Sharpe, Granville, 45
Sierra Leone—
Colony, trade statistics and information, 284–290, 463
Fetish School, 117
Silent trade (*see under* Trade)
Sisa, 171–174
Slave trade in seventeenth century, 478–499
Slaves, result of restoration to Africa, 44–46
Sleeping sickness, 160, 161–168
Slessor, Miss Mary, 159
Small-pox, 156, 158–160
Smaltz, Colonel, 232
Smeathman, Mr., 44
Smuggling, Native, 286, 287
Snake worship, 118
Souls (*see under* Fetish)
South Africa compared with West Africa, 317
Spices, 48–52
Spider worship, 118
Spinoza, 95, 101, 394
Spirits (*see under* Fetish)
Srahmantin, 116
Stool, the, 366, 385
Strachey, Mr. St. Loe, 278, 339
Sugar-cane, 245
Suicide, 160
Swanzy, F., 126
Swanzy, Messrs., 227

T

Tarquah Railway, 299
Taxation, 274, 282, 286, 294, 313, 317, 332
Theopompus, 192
Timber shipping, 62–68; trade, 66, 252, 293
Timbuctoo, 236
Tobacco, 289
Tornado, description, 15, 40
Trade—
American, 245
Association of French Merchants, 218
Bristol coast, 71–74
Cattle, 293
Commercial regions, classes of, 251
Conscience in, 108
Cotton, 246
Early trade with Africa, 459–477
English, 237, 244, 252
Fluctuations of, between civilised nations and West Africa, 203
French, 235–237, 251
General information, 245, 289–302
Gold, 205–210
Gum (acacia), 235
Iron, 289

Trade (*continued*)—
Ivory, 252
Ivory coast, 69–74
Machinery, 245
Oil, 252, 293, 301
Pepper, 51
Portuguese, 240, 243–247
Report by Mr. Scott-Elliott, 289
Route, description of, by Ca da Mostro, 206, 209
Rubber, 252, 293, 300
Rum, 245
Silent trade, 204, 209–211
Statistics, 246, 284—305
Sugar-cane, 245
Timber, 66, 252, 293
Tobacco, 289
Traders, West Coast, 237, 250, 268, 356
Trade boys, 399
Trade winds, 14
Tshi, Ewe and Yoruba, Fetish School, 98, 113, 118, 143
Tuesday, Fetish day in Gold Coast, 145
Tylor, Professor, 97

U

Ukukiwe, 135
Umaru l'Haji, 236
Unhealthiness, 263, 270, 283

V

Villant, Sieur, 221, 224
Voudou, 118

W

Wallace, Mr., on Imperialism, 423–428
Warri, 121, 472
West Coast Boats, Description of voyage on, 1–21; lines to Angola, 244
Wilson, Rev. Leighton, 319
Witch doctor, 102–104, 169–186
Witchcraft—
Disease and deaths caused by, 178–181, 185
Fetish and, 132–142
Witches, 174–176, 368, 386

Y

Yam custom, 147–149
Yawi, The, 159
Yoruba, Ewe and Tshi, Fetish School, 98, 113, 118, 143

THE END

RICHARD CLAY AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BUNGAY

Original Library Edition, containing the Description of the Natives of the Niger Coast Protectorate by M. le Comte C. N. de Cardi, occupying over 120 pages of the book, and also the account of a Voyage to the African Oil rivers twenty-five years ago, by Mr. John Harford,—both of which are omitted from the cheaper Edition.

8vo, 21*s.* net.

WEST AFRICAN STUDIES

BY

MARY H. KINGSLEY,

Author of "Travels in West Africa." With Illustrations and Maps.

TIMES—"Miss Kingsley has written a really amazing book, but she has, at the same time, written one of the most illuminating and instructive books on the problems of tropical Africa ever given to the public. . . . . Miss Kingsley has raised a subject of vital importance to the future welfare of our equatorial possessions in Africa, and has contributed many valuable suggestions to the discussion."

DAILY CHRONICLE.—"The general verdict on this book will be that it is the most weighty and valuable contribution on the internal politics of Western Africa that has yet seen the light. Like her first effort, *Travels in West Africa*, published in 1897, Miss Kingsley's *West African Studies* will take its place among the standard works of West African knowledge, to be referred to by coming generations as monuments of painstaking research, immense powers of observation, and remarkable descriptive ability."

PALL MALL GAZETTE.—"Miss Kingsley accomplishes a grand object in her latest work, which outrivals *Travels in West Africa*. By means of a bright, common-sense style and plenty of good anecdotes she ensnares the unwary reader into a profound study of West Africa and the reasons why we are there, and how Empire-builders ought to use their knowledge. . . . . Both print and paper are delightful, but the work itself is worthy of vellum."

ACADEMY.—"The most valuable book on the subject that has appeared for a long time. It is a complete summary of all things West African. Anecdotes abound; the chief subjects are, however, a highly interesting and reliable history of early West African discoveries—fetich, religion, witchcraft, native diseases, and medicines . . . . It is impossible to give an adequate idea of this entertaining and most important work, which is the result of great learning and of practical experience."

ATHENÆUM.—"Heartily welcome. . . . The writer's conclusions . . . . merit serious attention from all interested in our West African possessions."

LITERATURE.—"By interesting you and the world at large Miss Kingsley, with her knack of being readable, is doing service to the empire. She is accomplishing in her way what Mr. Kipling has done in his."

SPECTATOR—"Miss Kingsley needs no commendation as a narrator of experiences. No living traveller is half so amusing to read, and very few are half so instructive."

LONDON: MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD.

Abridged Popular Edition Now Ready.
Extra Crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

TRAVELS IN WEST AFRICA,

CONGO FRANÇAIS, CORISCO AND CAMEROONS.

BY

MARY H. KINGSLEY.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

ATHENÆUM.—"For all who know West Equatorial Africa Miss Kingsley's book will possess an absorbing interest, whilst those who have not yet visited that country will gain a vast amount of varied and useful information on many subjects. Long as this notice is, it is not so exhaustive as we could wish, but it is pleasant to find so much in this admirable book to praise and commend and so little to disagree with."

ACADEMY.—"A very interesting and singularly instructive book."

WESTMINSTER GAZETTE.—"A notable book about a very remarkable tour."

BLACK AND WHITE.—"By far the most important and most vivacious book of adventure published for many a day."

NATURE.—"The book stands alone as a vivid picture of West African life by a writer whose point of view is as nearly impartial as we can ever hope to see."

Crown 8vo, 8s. 6d. net.

NOTES ON SPORT AND TRAVEL.

BY

GEORGE HENRY KINGSLEY, M.D., F.L.S., &c.,

With a Memoir by his Daughter,

MARY H. KINGSLEY. With Portrait.

GUARDIAN.—"Unlike many sportsmen, George Kingsley had two invaluable gifts—a great love of the best literature (with the fine literary sense implied therein), and a total freedom from any tendency to exaggerate; and these double the value of the present volume. In these respects, too, his mantle has fallen on his daughter, whose memoir of him is written in a sparkling style, and gives a vivid picture of all sides of the man's character."

DAILY CHRONICLE.—"Deeply interesting. . . . The book is delightful; sparkling with humour; without a thought of malice."

LITERATURE.—"To Miss Kingsley we owe the bright and sparkling human story of the man, which is written with knowledge, lighted by affection, and strengthened by rare and peculiar sympathy. . . . Delightful book."

FIELD.—"Fascinating. . . . It is a book to read from beginning to end, to keep amongst the intimate friends of the favourite book-shelf, and to take down again and again."

SPECTATOR.—"Fascinating."

ST. JAMES'S GAZETTE.—"One of the most pleasant travel books of the present grudging publishing season."

MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD., LONDON.

MACMILLAN & CO'.S
BOOKS ON AFRICA.

Impressions of South Africa.

By the Right Hon. JAMES BRYCE, M.P., Author of "The Holy Roman Empire," etc. With Three Maps. Third Edition, Revised throughout. With a New Prefatory Chapter dealing with the events which have induced the present crisis, and with the text of the Transvaal Conventions of 1881 and 1884. Crown 8vo, 6*s*.

South Africa of To-day.

By Captain FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, C.I.E., Indian Staff Corps. With Illustrations. New Edition. Crown 8vo, 6*s*.

Nine Years at the Gold Coast.

By the Rev. DENNIS KEMP. With numerous Illustrations and Map. 8vo, 12*s*. 6*d*. net.

The Settlement after the War in South Africa.

By M. J. FARRELLY, LL.D. 8vo, 10*s*. net.

Four Months Besieged.

The Story of Ladysmith. By H. H. S. PEARSE, War Correspondent of *The Daily News*. Crown 8vo, 6*s*.

Adventures in Mashonaland.

By Two Hospital Nurses. By ROSE BLENNERHASSETT and LUCY SLEEMAN. Crown 8vo, 3*s*. 6*d*.

A Hunter's Wanderings in Africa.

Nine Years amongst the Game of the Far Interior of South Africa. By FREDERICK COURTENEY SELOUS. With Map and Nineteen Full-page Illustrations by SMIT and WHYMPER. 8vo, 18*s*.

African Hunting and Adventure from Natal

to the Zambesi, including Lake Ngami, the Kalahari Desert, etc., from 1852 to 1860. By WILLIAM CHARLES BALDWIN, F.R.G.S. With numerous Illustrations by JOSEPH WOLF and J. B. ZWECKER. 8vo, 18*s*.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD., LONDON.

MACMILLAN & CO.'S
RECENT WORKS OF TRAVEL.

From Sea to Sea, and other Sketches.
Letters of Travel. By RUDYARD KIPLING. Two Vols. Crown 8vo, 6*s.* each.

The Soul of a People.
An Account of the Life and Belief of the Burmese. By HAROLD FIELDING. Second Edition. 8vo, 14*s.*

China, the Long-Lived Empire.
By ELIZA RUHAMAH SCIDMORE. Ex. cr. 8vo, 8*s.* 6*d.* net.

The Attaché at Peking.
By A. B. FREEMAN-MITFORD, C.B. Cr. 8vo, 6*s.*

The Philippines and Round About.
With some Account of British Interests in these Waters. By Major G. J. YOUNGHUSBAND, Queen's Own Corps of Guides, F.R.G.S. With Illustrations and Map. 8vo, 8*s.* 6*d.* net.

A Visit to Java.
By W. BASIL WORSFOLD. With Map and Illustrations from Sketches by the Author. 8vo, 14*s.*

Observations of a Ranchwoman in New MEXICO. By Mrs. NICHOLL. Crown 8vo, 6*s.*

In the Australian Bush and on the Coast of THE CORAL SEA. A Naturalist in Australia. By RICHARD SEMON. Numerous Illustrations and Maps. Super Royal 8vo, 21*s.* net.

The Native Tribes of Central Australia.
By Prof. BALDWIN SPENCER of the University of Melbourne, and F. J. GILLEN, Sub-Protector of the Aborigines. With numerous Illustrations. 8vo, 21*s.* net.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD., LONDON.